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MY TENT.

AUTUMN MANŒUVRING.

DOAT upon the military. From my earliest infancy my dreams have ever been of soldiers. The first flavour that floats on the memory of my palate is the luscious, bitter taste of a toy grenadier's wooden bearskin, or, rather, the paint thereof. When I was eight years old I possessed a dozen

boxes of German warriors; when I was fifteen the pasteboard barracks of my troops were to be counted by the score. To this day I remember that there were three sorts of leaden soldiers. The first I discarded at a very early age. When I was five years old their metal faces struck me as improbable—when I was six as

impossible. The second sort were certainly more finished, but still lacked something. If I am not mistaken, that something was the paint that should have appeared on their rifles, but didn't. As for the third sort, they were all but perfect. If I wished to find fault with them, I might perhaps hint that the regimental expression (worn by every man in the battalion, from the colonel waving his unsubstantial sword, to the drummer playing his fanciful drum) were just a trifle doleful. With this exception, the third sort were admirable, beautiful. My ordnance at first was small, and apt to get out of order. When a shot got into the wires of my cannon, the gun was reduced to silent inactivity. As I grew older I called science to my aid. First I was assisted by the homely peashooter. This, however, soon gave way to the riper brass gun, which in its turn was superseded by the revolver of matured manhood.

Having admitted that I was fond of playing at soldiers in my youth, no one should be surprised to learn that I joined the militia in my old age. Perhaps the gay uniform in a military tailor's shop window may have induced me to make the choice I did; perhaps it was a patriotic resolve to defend with the last drop of my blood the unviolated pavement of Chelsea the homely, of Brompton the semi-genteel. It is not for me to say whether love of country, or love of silver lace, made me don the shako. Those who know me know that I am as brave as a lion, fierce as an eagle, clever as a serpent—on paper. Let that pass. I say little but mean much. Should the Pentonville Road ever be threatened by the haughty invader, I shall not shrink from my duty. A brave man flies, but never surrenders!

I shall never forget my feeling of exultation when I read the announcement of my appointment to a lieutenancy in the 9th Loamshire Regiment of Militia. The heels of my boots seemed to grow beneath me, my head to expand, my chest to inflate, my very heart to increase in bulk. I became a different man. I felt for the first time a wild kind of loyalty. I seriously believe that had my friend Jones entered my chambers at the moment, and suggested some mad scheme of adventure, I should have accepted his proposition with haste, confidence, and enthusiasm. It is lucky for me that Jones did *not* exclaim, 'Look here, I know a fellow of the name of Smith, who is a descendant of Charles II. Let us unfurl his banner!'—for if he *had* made the observation, I should unquestionably have got into trouble. Not that I am a Jacobite; on the contrary, I infinitely prefer the reigning house to the family of the Stuarts. Still any cause calculated to produce a disturbance would have found favour in my sight. The announcement in the 'Gazette' had turned me from a man of peace to a man of war. I ceased to be Brown, and became D'Artagnan, Hannibal, the late Duke of Wellington. I glanced proudly at my dining-room chairs, and smiled confidently at my sideboard. For the moment I was the head of an army, the leader of many faithful followers.

On the day following my appointment I received numerous letters from tailors, thirsting to garb my warrior limbs in martial array. Among the number I found a note from a well-known outfitter in Aldershot, reminding me that I would want camp furniture during the manœuvres. Then I knew that we were to go; that it was ordained that the gallant

9th Loamshire should carry terror into the hearts of the sheep, and desolation into the styes of the pigs of Hampshire. We were to burn powder, and to wear out shoe leather to keep Mr. Cardwell at the War Office, and Mr. Gladstone at the head of the Government. It was a noble task, and my cheeks flushed with pride, tenderness, and pleasure.

During the next two days I was measured for my uniform. Then, to prepare myself for the coming toil, I dressed myself fantastically, perhaps, but still usefully. I wore on my head a washhand-stand basin of large dimensions to accustom myself to the weight of the shako, and rolled round my throat a stiff piece of oil cloth in preparation for the regimental stock. More than this, I took trouble to carry my umbrella in a military fashion, and hummed a march as I walked along. With my uniform arrived an official letter, ordering me to report myself at the headquarters of my regiment at Slocum-on-the-Nooze, there (or elsewhere) to undergo thirty-five days of military training, or, rather, hard labour. It was not for me to criticise the commands of my superiors. The first duty of a soldier was (I felt) obedience. So without more ado I assumed the red coat of old England, decorated with the buttons of young Slocum-on-the-Nooze, and joined my regiment as directed. Owing to the earliness of the hour of the morning that I was forced to use for my journey, but few damsels were out to smile upon me. I felt that had I passed through the streets at noon scores of blushing maidens would have kissed their hands to me, and perhaps pelted me with roses. Their aged parents would, doubtlessly, have appeared at the doors of their houses to bless me as a true soldier and a

brave knight. As it was, however, only one old man saw me—I nearly drove over him in my chariot. He looked angrily at me, and, alas! did not *bless* me. Ah me, such is life!

Slocum-on-the-Nooze (which is just sixty-seven miles from London) is not a pretty place. The streets are narrow, and the inhabitants ragged. I believe that the trade of the place consists chiefly of 'winkles.' One of the principal merchants imports (now and then) a considerable quantity of tripe, and another has been known to export onions by the dozen. In spite of this, I repeat, Slocum is not a pretty place. It lacks the marble of Venice, the dignity of London, the antiquity of Rome. And when I have said this, I must leave a further description of Slocum to some *civilian* pen. It becomes not a hero of Chobham, a victor of the Hog's Back, a marcher-past of Aldershot to write a guide-book to a provincial suburb. Let men of the pen look to Slocum-on-the-Nooze, for men of the sword have nobler work in view.

With my shako very much on one side, with my red scarf fully displayed, and with my sword haughtily hanging between my legs, I entered the barrack yard. My appearance created a sensation. Sergeants, of twenty stone and more, saluted me. Corporals, in tunics and strange head-dresses (chiefly 'billycock' hats), hailed me as one of their lords. I was the hero of the five seconds and a half. Proudly, but (owing to the inconvenient position of my sword) somewhat ungracefully, I stumbled into the presence of the major commanding. As becomes a militia chieftain, he was fierce, epigrammatic, and portly. Every yard of him was a soldier, except about three inches—those three inches were his boots—the button

boots of old Regent Street, the darlings of Pall Mall.

'I am glad to see you, sir,' he said, fiercely; then, turning sharply round, he cried, frantically, 'Hi, here! Fetch the bugler! Here, you man, call the bugler.' A score of rough-looking clod-hoppers hurried hither and thither in search of the regimental minstrel. When the musician had been found (he had been discovered playing 'Down among the Coals' on a concertina to an admiring throng), he expressed his sentiments on the trumpet in a manner more remarkable for violence than a love of sweet melody. A smart captain informed me that the sentiments thus expressed were known as 'the officers' call,' and invited me to attend him to the orderly-room.

The apartment in question was furnished with a number of kitchen chairs, a rickety sofa, and an old table. On the white-washed walls appeared sundry notices full of interesting information about the prices of a soldier's kit. Remembering my hosier's bill, I was surprised to learn that shirts can be bought at a lesser sum than twenty-one shillings each. Again, razors seemed to be wonderfully cheap, and, as for socks, there appeared to be a plethora of them in the market. About twenty officers seated themselves on the kitchen-chairs; and then the major, taking off his forage cap (an example that was followed by every one present), addressed us in the following words:— 'Now, gentlemen, you are aware that I am in command of this regiment. The colonel, (here he sneered),—the colonel, I repeat gentlemen, has got leave. He will not accompany us to Hampshire. You may guess the reason why.' (Here we smiled at one another ironically.) 'I had

rather pass the matter over, gentlemen. But, gentlemen, I must call your attention to one fact, gentlemen. As civilians, you are civilians, gentlemen. I see before me gentlemen in your midst, gentlemen, a number of distinguished men, gentlemen. All the liberal professions are represented here, gentlemen — you are barristers, doctors, merchants, and authors.' (Here he looked fiercely at me. I blushed, and smiled softly.) 'I repeat, gentlemen, you are all confoundedly clever men, gentlemen, as civilians. But here, gentlemen, you are *not* civilians.' (I drew myself up to my full height.) 'No; hang it, gentlemen, you are all under the Mutiny Act; and, gentlemen, if you give me the smallest trouble, gentlemen, I will try every man Jack of you, gentlemen, by General Court Martial, gentlemen. Thank you, gentlemen; that is all, gentlemen.' And our worthy chief assumed his forage cap, and left the orderly-room.

And let me here remark, that the major's bark was very much worse than his bite. The poor man was a little overweighted. Suddenly called upon to take command of the 9th Loamshire in the absence of their colonel he made up for his lack of experience by a demeanour calculated to strike terror into the heart of the boldest rebel, supposing always that said rebel was under thirteen years of age.

When I again entered the barrack square the regiment was assembled, awaiting (like so many military brothers of Cinderella) the fairy sword of the quartermaster to change their parti-coloured rags into scarlet uniforms. I was told off to my company, and at length felt that the hour of my authority had arrived. Why should I recount the many

troubles I experienced before the men entrusted to my charge were properly garbed for duty? Is it not enough to hint that when we marched to the Slocum-on-the-Nooze railway station, *en route* for Aldershot, there was not a man in my company who could not boast of a tunic, a shako, and a pair of overalls? If tall men got short lower clothing, and small men got gigantic coats, is that my fault? No; I put down all such matters to the continuance of that spirit which sanctioned the purchase system, and grudged the money spent upon the Abyssinian campaign. In other words, although my head may be indifferent, my heart is, has been, and ever shall be, in the right place. So let no more be said about it. Our men were quickly packed into the railway carriages, and then were carried, shouting and singing, to Aldershot.

And now, having got through my preface, I commence the story of my campaigning in earnest. As I write I fancy I hear the fierce blast of the bugle, the rattle of musketry, the shouts of the militia, and the anguish of the volunteers. I remember that I have survived any number of forced marches, cavalry charges, and hollow squares. My shrunken frame tells me that I have been half starved, and all but fatigued to death. I remember that I tasted not of champagne for a week, of *paté de fois gras* for ten days. I remember all this, and look at my breast. I look in vain. No, I can see no Victoria Cross, not even a medal with seven clasps. And this, oh my country—this, oh Britannia, is thy gratitude!

As the train containing our gallant regiment (who had been passing the last two hours in singing 'See the Conquering Hero comes') entered the station of

Aldershot, the rain began to fall steadily. This demonstration on the part of the weather seemed to damp the ardour of the troops, and in a silence deep, if not solemn, we marched to the quarters prepared for us. We were to remain under canvas until we were wanted to resist the fast-approaching enemy. We were to be ever on the alert. No hostile omnibus was to be allowed to pass our lines without receiving a deadly volley of blank cartridge. When I heard our orders, I shuddered for the unwary hansom and the adventurous donkey-cart. Like great spiders, we were to await the approach of the civilian fly—that fly doomed to attack, if not battery. After we had received our instructions, we posted our sentries, and dismissed our men.

Attended by my servant (who, by-the-by, was a melancholy man of middle age—he accounted for his chronic dullness by informing me that he had once been a waiter in a music hall, supported by the great Smith, better known as 'the Lion Comique of Battersea'), I made the best of my way to my tent. It was not a large apartment. Arrangements had evidently been made by the designer to obtain the minimum of utility combined with the maximum of discomfort. I found subsequently that it was fond of coming down bodily in a midnight storm. It was provided with holes looking like watch-pockets, admirably adapted for collecting and disseminating the moisture in tiny streams or in heavy drops. My furniture was neither neat nor gaudy. A bedstead on the scissors pattern, so constructed that with the least encouragement it collapsed under you, and brought you to the ground. A chair, a very portable chair, warranted to come to pieces for folding at a

moment's notice; nay, sometimes (when you were sitting on it) at less than a moment's notice. A rickety table, with red legs and a deal top, and a fairylike washhand-stand, ready to come to pieces and turn into a stick at the owner's will and pleasure. This fairylike washhand-stand required careful handling. Eccentric and top-heavy to the last degree, it thought nothing of yielding to the lightest pressure (applied unconsciously by the thoughtless), and tumbling over on to the bed. These articles, with a comic looking-glass (much given to caricature), and a piece of cocoa-nut matting, comprised my 'furniture.'

Tired with the excitement of the day, I lay down on my warrior couch, and sending my servant to the adjutant for orders, opened the newspaper I had brought with me from head-quarters, and began to read. I was gently falling to asleep over a sensational leader, when my slave (his name was Potts) returned.

'Beg your pardon, sir,' said he, 'but you are for duty to-day, as Lieutenant Hume Hamilton has gone sick. It's time to turn out the guard. Help you on with your sword; yes, sir.'

Hurriedly assuming my martial garb, I left the tent, and stumbling over ropes and pegs, found my way to the rear-guard. On my approach the sergeant formed up the men in double rank, and went through several evolutions, concluding with a general 'present arms.'

'Sergeant,' said I, calling the non-commissioned officer apart, and speaking to him confidentially, 'are you accustomed in this regiment to paying subalterns the compliments usually reserved for field marshals and full generals?'

I spoke with some severity, as I had learned Part I. of the Field Exercises.

'Well, no, sir,' replied the sergeant, 'not usually. But it was your first turn, sir, and I wanted to make it a kind of little 'oliday for you. When a gentleman turns out the guard for the first time, some sergeants tell their men to whisper softly, "Ooray!" Well, I say, "ooray," even when whispered softly, ain't soldier-like, so I invariably presents arms.'

'Any prisoners, sergeant?'

'One, sir.'

'Let me see him.'

I was escorted to the tent containing the captive (who was made to rise on my entrance), and asked him the usual question, 'Any complaints?'

'Yes, sir, I wants to see the doctor.'

'Why? What's the matter with you?'

'Well, sir,' said the man, 'I'm that dry, that I think I could toss off a pint or so of physic.'

Leaving the would-be medical toper to his fate, I marched up to the sentries and directed them to give over their orders. I may say here that the orders are to the following effect:—'Keep charge of all government property in view, behave in a soldierly manner at my post, and salute all officers according to their ranks, challenge every one entering or leaving lines from tattoo to reveillé, in case of fire alarm the guard.' The above was the proper answer to my question. However, the first sentry I visited preferred to give a version of his own.

'Your orders,' said I, severely.

The man at once came to 'attention,' and then excitedly went through as much as he could of the manual exercise before being checked by the sergeant. At last he got (with the assistance of the non-commissioned officer) to 'port arms.'

'Your orders,' I repeated.

'Bedad, your honor,' replied the sentry, with a slight brogue, 'it's to alarm the guard that I am, and I will when it's dark and they're not looking. I have got to salute the officers when I find 'em in the ranks, but a devil a one have I found out yet. I am to take charge of the intoire government property and them knapsacks, and if I catch any beggar (bad luck to him!) making a tattoo in the valley, I am to charge him, and faith, so will I. So you can be aisy, sorr, it's all roight!'

With this the sentry went through some more evolutions, and marched away with the repeated assurance that I might 'be aisy.' Having done my duty, I turned in the guard, and re-entered my tent.

The next morning, as day broke o'er the town of Aldershot, Potts called me from the land of dreams, and whispered in my unwilling ears, 'rations.'

'You must get up, sir, please,' said my slave; 'the meat's come, and they are sounding for the orderlies.'

I rose with a grumble, and assumed a kind of Highland uniform consisting of a nightgown, great-coat, sword and sword-belt, forage cap and slippers. Thus appareled, I inspected some hundredweight of uncooked beef, and watched the butcher as he cut it up for the men. Each company had so many tents, each tent had an orderly, and it was these orderlies who fetched the rations and made the complaints.

'This is starvation, this is,' said one of these men. 'There's an ounce of bone to every pound of meat!'

'Well, if it will starve you, Smith, you can leave it,' replied the sergeant. 'There's no necessity to waste good meat upon dying men.'

'And look here,' cried another, 'not a bit of lean. I don't call this meat.'

'Miles, you're no judge of meat,' the sergeant again put in. 'Now, if it were workhouse gruel, I would take your opinion before any one's.'

And thus it went on. The orderlies complaining, the sergeants chaffing, and I shivering. For two hours I watched the lumps of blue beef as they were served out. Then I retired, unhooked my sword, took off my coat and slippers, and jumped into a bed which gave way under me. Ah, the life of a soldier is a merry one!

It would be tedious to recount the duties of that dull day. I never inspected so many things before in all my life. Now it was tea, now medicines, now prisoners, now soup, now rheumatic drummers, now tents. It is only just to say that 'inspecting' did not give me much trouble. It is a simple operation. You follow a corporal, who observes at stated intervals, 'Tention! Any complaints?' You hurry on without waiting for a reply. If you wish to be considered a smart officer you clash your sword a good deal, wear a white collar above your patrol-jacket, and carry a small stick. Do this with dash, and every field marshal in the British army will admire, honour, and (if it lies in his power) reward you.

In the evening an orderly rode over with despatches for our chief. In a moment the 'officers' call' was sounded on the bugle, and we hastened to surround our commander.

'Now, gentlemen,' said the major, 'we strike our tents to-morrow, gentlemen — at seven o'clock, gentlemen; so, gentlemen, I shall expect you all to be ready to start, gentlemen, at three. That will give us time, I think, Captain

Hinkman, to pull out the pegs, eh?"

'Certainly,' replied the adjutant. Good fellow, Hinkman; every one liked him. Sang the best song in the regiment, and knew how to mix a salad to perfection.

'You know, gentlemen,' continued the chief, fiercely, 'only forty pounds of personal luggage. Do not let me catch an officer, gentlemen, carrying an ounce more, gentlemen. Do you hear, gentlemen? The Mutiny Act is in force, gentlemen. Thank you, gentlemen.'

So we were off. The field allowance of forty pounds meant immediate active service. With a heavy heart I went to bed. I believed, judging from the stories I had heard of previous flying columns, that starvation was my certain fate. Feeling this, I dropped a tear for my bereaved family and my trustful tradesmen.

At a very early hour the next morning the camp arose like one man. The time occupied in striking a tent is generally about three minutes. Thus, through the foresight of the major commanding,



OUR MEN.

we had plenty of leisure to perform the operation—in point of fact, to reduce it to figures, four hours' time for not four minutes' work. It was a cold morning, but the gallant chief was on his horse. The everlasting 'officers' call' was sounded.

'Now, gentlemen,' said the major, 'you know how to strike the tents. Let each man be at his place, gentlemen, and when the "G" sounds on the bugle, down with

the tents together, gentlemen. Thank you, gentlemen.'

We hurried off to our respective companies, and superintended the preparations for striking.

'Now, gentlemen,' cried the major from his horse, 'let every man be in his place. Officers of companies, see to your men. What's the adjutant about there? Captain Hinkman, look to your tent, sir! It's the duty of every officer to see after his own tent. Mind

that, sir. Now, where's the bugler? Where's the bugler? Confound that bugler! Bugler! Now, officers of companies, look after your men. Mind, Captain Hinkman, every officer is responsible for the striking of his own tent. Now, bugler—sound!

The bugle sounded, and every tent fell to the ground—but one.

'Good heavens!' shouted the major, foaming with rage. 'Whose tent is that? I know it's an officer's; I tell you it's an officer's. I know it is.'

He was perfectly right—the tent was his own!

We marched from our encampment. It was a dreary progress. Mile after mile of heat and dust. Nothing to eat, and nothing to drink. Our baggage was carried by indifferent horses, harnessed to indifferent waggons. The steeds reminded me of bathing machines, and the conveyances of East End pleasure vans out of repair.

At last, after a heavy day's march, we came to a halt. We pitched our tents, and then came the great question of mess. Would that I had the pencil of a Leech, a Keene, or a Sambourne to sketch the scene. Figure to yourself a deal table of the roughest description, covered with an old copy of the 'Times,' and you have our board and tablecloth. Figure to yourself plates represented by sheets of note-paper, and cut glass by one pewter pot and an egg-cup. Figure to yourself easy-chairs abolished in favour of stable pails. Last, and not least, figure to yourself a comfortable dinner *à la Russe* superseded by a coarse, half-cooked meal of thick beef and fat mutton. It was a painful sight to see the major waiting for his food. Vigorous disgust, combined with a sort of quaint grief, made his face exceeding sorrowful. I watched him with triumph. In every

mouthful of the mutton I recognised an avenger. He slighted me on parade, the commissariat slighted him at the mess hour.

And now I regret to say I have to make a confession. I have called this article Autumn Manœuvring, because I manœuvred in the autumn. But can I tell you how I manœuvred? Frankly, no. The golden rule of the generals in command seemed to be this. When in doubt, march a militia regiment thirty miles before breakfast. As far as I could judge, the generals seemed always to be in doubt. Only once had we an opportunity of distinguishing ourselves. After a long march we got under fire, and advanced in line towards the enemy.

'My men,' cried the major, 'when we get a little nearer we will deliver a volley, and then let 'em have the bayonet!'

Full of enthusiasm, we advanced. In a moment an 'umpire'-general's aide-de-camp galloped after us.

'Retire your men, sir,' shouted the aide-de-camp.

'Why, sir?' asked our chief, angrily.

'Because, sir,' replied the emissary, 'you and your regiment have been dead men for the last three-quarters of an hour!'

So we (representing on this occasion our ghosts) retired.

The manœuvring at length came to an end. We fought the battle of Chobham by marching twenty-five miles without meeting a soul. We were the heroes of the Hog's Back at a distance. We marched, and marched, and marched. We starved on 'bully' soup, and nearly died with Frensham water. Really and truly our men and officers behaved admirably. Pleasantry apart, the Militia performed their duty to everybody's entire satisfaction. At length, however, we were ordered home.

I shall never forget the scene. We marched through the squalid streets of Slocum on a dull autumn day. The wives of many of our men had come to meet them. These wives (probably smarting under neglect, and an unpaid rent bill) threatened their husbands with the most terrible domestic punishments. The men

looked miserable, the sky looked dull, the houses looked wretched. This being the case the band found an appropriate air, and played 'Home, sweet home.'

'Ah! the soldier's life is a merry one!' So merry that a month of it goes a very long way indeed.

ARTHUR A BECKETT.



"HOME, SWEET HOME."

TWO PLUNGES FOR A PEARL.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE GLOSSOP GHOST.

LAUNCELOT LYDIARD was a day behind his appointment with old Wissett of Gray's Inn. When that excellent solicitor saw him at last he scolded him gravely.

'Mr. Lydiard,' he said, 'you should not forget that property has its correspondent duties. You have no right to vanish in this wild way from the sight of your agents and tenants. I dare say you are in love—it is natural—the measles of adolescence; but there is no excuse in that for your abandoning all your duties. And now you come back to all manner of difficulties.'

'Well, Mr. Wissett,' said Launcelot, 'let us fight our difficulties at once. Am I the wrongful heir?'

'Not exactly. This Roger Lydiard I wrote you about is a fellow who ran away to sea in his youth, and who has always been a scamp, and who now wants to extort money. You may leave him to me. I think, as he's a cousin of yours, you might give him a hundred pounds, on the understanding that it was a final charity.'

'By all means,' said Launcelot. 'Give him two, if you think fit. I leave him wholly in your hands.'

'You are rather lucky to have a reasonably honest lawyer,' said Wissett. 'Now there is another thing: one of your best tenants, Ralph Sandford, has become a bankrupt. When I wrote to you I understood that his failure had been caused by betting on horse-races; but this I find to be an invention of the enemy. The poor fellow never made a bet in his life; he has been swindled into becoming security for a scampish relation,

and has lost about three thousand pounds. The loss came so suddenly that he could make no arrangements, and a harsh creditor forced him into bankruptcy. I went down to investigate the matter, and I had complete sympathy with the poor fellow, for he is evidently quite ignorant of the world, though an admirable farmer; and he has a nice little wife, and some young children.'

'Pay his debts, Mr. Wissett, and annul the bankruptcy. I can see by a case like this that I am not doing my duty. If I had been living at home, and getting on friendly terms with my tenants, this poor fellow would have come and asked my advice or my help. Clear his debts right off, and tell him he need not trouble about repayment; that I'll leave to him. The least I can do is to make some atonement for my own failings.'

Launcelot left his legal friend, and walked to his hotel, to ascertain if Edward Goddard had called. That young gentleman was there, as it happened, and they had a quiet dinner together. After dinner Launcelot produced for his friend's inspection the spectral letter from Canice Glossop.

'Yes,' said Ned Goddard, laughing, 'I wrote that.'

'You wrote it! How was that? and what is the meaning of it all?'

'The meaning is that I thought you were wasting your time a little. You remember you asked me, if I could find leisure, to run over and look after Larcom's cataloguing? Well, I went and stayed a day or two, and drank some of your choicest wine, I assure you.

One day, walking in that old corridor, where we fancied we heard the rustle of Canice Gossop's silk dress, and the tap, tap, tap of her high-heeled boots, I noticed the sun glinting on something bright upon the floor. Examining, I found it to be a sort of button or knob of steel. I pressed it, and found that it opened a trapdoor. I looked into the cavity below—and beheld there were books and manuscripts; but I did not make any further investigation, for I thought it would be pleasanter for you and me to investigate together. What I did was to write you a letter, forging the name of Canice Gossop—for which forgery I fear the old lady will never be able to prosecute me.

'Ah!' said Lydiard, 'and you regularly mystified me. I never thought of your playing the part of Canice Gossop. I must go up to Gossop Grange to-morrow, and look after affairs. Will you come with me? Then we can find out what lies beneath your wonderful trapdoor.'

So next morning they started by the first fast train for the North, and came to Gossop Grange and surprised the people in charge. Larcom was busy with his catalogue; he found himself better qualified to act as librarian than as valet. Launcelot and Ned Goddard sat down to an excellent dinner—for Yorkshire is a fine dining country; and then they sat for some time over a bottle of very drinkable port. Then said Ned Goddard—

'Suppose we open the trapdoor.'

'Wait till midnight,' said Launcelot, magnificently. 'Let us give Canice Gossop a chance of being present. Meanwhile, suppose we have a bottle of the famous old Tokay which delighted Wissett's heart. There's plenty of it, I'm glad to say. After a glass or two of that ghosts will seem ridiculous.'

Tokay is a great wine, and our friends thoroughly enjoyed it. Then, as agreed, they went to the corridor and pulled up the trapdoor which Edward Goddard had accidentally discovered. It was a very dusty hole beneath; but it was found to contain treasures. There were several rare heterodox books, which seemed to have been deposited there when even a gentleman's library was not free from the *delator*—books irregular and dangerous, the ordinary world would maintain: books of erratic and eccentric theories and heresies, which are in these days curiosities of literature. Nothing is more strange than the way in which a thing that seems abominable to the great thinkers of one generation shall become perfectly tolerable by the mildest thinkers of the next. It is not progress. I believe the human race incapable of progress. It is just fashion—the essential result of human gregariousness. In one decade you have the High Church, and hair plainly dressed; in the next the Low Church and the chignon. So the changes occur—and it is very much the same with politics.

When Lydiard and his friend pulled up that mysterious trapdoor they listened for the footsteps of a ghost; but no ghost appeared. I need hardly remark at this point that ghosts are impossible. Coleridge proved it *ex absurdo*. Still, I like a good ghost story. Here is my testimony in favour of that form of fiction:

'Who would care to pass his life away
Of the Lotos-land a dreamful denizen—

Lotos-islands in a waveless bay,
Sung by Alfred Tennyson?

'Who would care to be a dull new-comer
Far across the wild sea's wide abysses,
Where, about the earth's 3000th summer

Passed divine Ulysses? —

'Rather give me coffee, art, a book,
From my windows a delicious sea-
view,
Southdown mutton, somebody to cook—
"Music?" I believe you.

'Strawberry icebergs in the summer
time—
But of elmwood many a massive
splinter,
Good ghost stories, and a classic rhyme
For the nights of winter.

'Now and then a friend and some sau-
terne,
Now and then a haunch of Highland
venison;
And for Lotos-land I'll never yearn
Malgré Alfred Tennyson.'

But let us return to Lydiard
and his friend. They did their ut-
most to investigate this wretched
old box.

After getting as grimy as a brace
of chimney sweepers, during which
operation Ned Goddard ruefully
quoted Shakespeare,

'Golden lads and lasses must,
Like chimney-sweepers, come to dust,'

they found that they had collected
rather a curious lot of prohibited
old tractates. Here in this free
England of ours, where indeed
folly is getting a trifle too free,
we forget that there was once a
time when free speech and even
free thought were as far as pos-
sible prohibited. We have reached
a point of development which is
admirable for men of the higher
sort, though I fear it does not en-
tirely suit mendicants and mate-
rialists and positivists. The Eng-
lish is just now the greatest race
on the earth's surface; it will con-
tinue to be a great race if not too
much dosed with the nostrums of
Darwin and Fawcett, of Huxley
and Winterbotham. The English
race has hit upon one grand idea:
make your work play—never think.
This is an excellent notion. It
breeds a great race, giants physi-
cally, who don't overwork their
brain; and it occasionally pro-

duces an intellectual giant, such as
Shakespeare or Byron.

However, the oddest thing our
friends found in this odd corner
was nothing more nor less than
the will of Canice Glossop, dated
1671. In this document she left
her whole property to Maudlin
College, Oxford, to be carefully
dealt with and the profits invested
until such time that women were
allowed to become members of the
university—at which time the
whole amount was to be paid over
to the warden and fellows of
Maudlin, for the purpose of estab-
lishing fellowships for ladies of
gentle birth.

I think it is obvious that Canice
Glossop was a nice fellow.

'What am I to do about this?'
said Launcelot Lydiard to his
friend that evening after dinner.
'Here's a will that disinherits
everybody.'

'A prophetic will,' said God-
dard. 'She must have foreseen
the Fawcett and the Faithfull.'

'All very fine, my dear Ned:
but what ought I to do? It
matters very little to me, for I am
getting into condition, and I think
I could manage to live without
much trouble. But take the ques-
tion on its merits—legally and
casuistically. Have I any right to
go on living on this estate when
it is clear that one of its previous
holders designed it to be devoted
to female B.A.'s and M.A.'s—
babies in arms and mistresses of
arrowroot?'

'Put the matter otherwise,' said
Ned Goddard. 'Who was Canice
Glossop? What proof have you
that the estate was hers and that
she had power to devise it. Again:
suppose that she had—how are
you to deal with the matter at this
moment? How are you to verify
a will that has never passed into
the Court of Probate? Take my
advice, my dear Launcelot,—ignore

the existence of this will and go on quietly as heretofore.'

'You would not have me destroy it?' said Launcelot.

'Assuredly not. It is no business of yours to bring it before the public; but, if there is any external evidence of its existence, wait till that is brought forward. It may be a forgery; even if authentic, the law would have to decide whether any person had a right to leave real estate for so wild a purpose. I think you need not trouble yourself about the affair. It is simply absurd to suppose that there is anything binding in the will of an elderly gentlewoman who subsequently appeared as a ghost.'

Launcelot accepted this reasoning, and put the spectral testament away in a remote corner of his private stores. And he asked Edward Goddard to come back with him to Ottershire, to which that young gentleman made no particular objection. Thither let us follow him, and see how he gets on with Sir Arthur Murray.

CHAPTER XXIX. AND LAST.

THE SECOND PLUNGE.

This is a world in which, as a general rule, everything goes wrong. Still, there are exceptions; and those exceptions occur when unusual mental energy is brought to bear on the course of events. To a work of fiction it is frequently objected by the gentry of Grub Street that its incidents are improbable—that its characters are such as they have never encountered. They reason from their own point of view. They are literary insects, whom my friend Mr. Campkin of the Reform Club puts under his glass, and scientifically describes. My experience of life differs widely from this. I have written a good many novels; but I

have never ventured to put in any one of them adventures so strange, or characters so unusual, as those which I have encountered in reality. In both incident and adventure the world is infinitely rich. We miss these things, perpetually. We fail to perceive that there is something new at every turn of life, if only we had the capacity to accept and comprehend it. It is just like the diurnal movement of the world. I say God creates things anew every morning, and paints a new and unprecedented sunset every time. My astrometeorological friend across the way assures me that this is a mistake, and that he can account for it all on natural causes.

The weakness of mankind is perpetually 'shying' that grand monotheism which is the only true creed. We are always afraid of God. The scientist turns the Divinity into a kind of committee which he calls *Nature*. The poetist turns the Divinity into a kind of committee which he calls *Providence*. My own experience of terrestrial committees is so unfavourable that I am slightly prejudiced against celestial committees. I take it that what men call Nature is the hand of God, and that what men call Providence is the mind of God. Only, in their miserable misconception, they dwarf both.

To return to our muttons. Launcelot Lydiard settled his affairs at Glossop Grange; and came back as early as possible to the cottage on the Ottermoor. With him came Ned Goddard, who was delighted to hear the news, and who seemed likely to be useful as a companion for Sir Arthur Murray. It occurred to Launcelot that if he were making love to Rosalind and Chesington to Ianthe, dear old Sir Arthur would find it confoundedly slow; it also occurred to him that the old gentleman would refresh

his mind by intercourse with a joyous boy like Ned Goddard.

Launcelot and his friend reached the cottage in the middle of the day. Everybody was out. They got a little refreshment, and learnt from the servants which way the party had gone, and started to meet them. From their conversation it was assumed that they had gone again to visit Vision Tor. They at once started in that direction. No human creature did they see in passing across the wide wild moorland. It was a glorious walk; Launcelot and Ned Goddard excessively enjoyed it; but all the while Launcelot was worrying himself as to what had become of Rosalind, as to how soon he should be able to ask her a certain momentous question.

And then—he lost his way. He found himself quite out of the track which as he well knew led to Vision Tor. The Ottermoor is wide: you may easily get on a wrong track; police are few and direction posts fewer. Hence it happened that Launcelot Lydiard, who generally went straight to his point, blundered terribly on the present occasion, and came far later to the cavern of Vision Tor than he expected.

And when he came thither, what think you he saw? A vast rock had fallen over the mouth of the cavern; and, if there was any one within, their chance of extrication was extremely small.

For that had happened which still occasionally happens in the granite regions of England. I have experienced it once or twice. It is what we call an earthquake. It is when our Alma Mater pulsates a trifle more rapidly than usual. There had been just a twinge of earthquake in Ottershire—as if our planetary parent had suffered local rheumatism—and the cavern was effectually blocked. Was there

anybody inside? Was Sir Arthur Murray? Was Lord Chessington? Were Ianthe and Rosalind?

Yes, they were all there. They had come across to Vision Tor for a walk, and had been again attracted by the caverns. Everybody was there. They had loitered away into the very penetralia of the famous cave, and had amused themselves at the Wishing Well, and had enjoyed the afternoon immensely. But suddenly, as Lord Chessington and Ianthe were standing by that mystic fountain, the water therein disappeared with a strange gulp, and a curious lurid light came upon the scene.

'This is odd,' said the Earl, who was sitting just above the basin of the Wishing Well. 'How suddenly the water disappeared! I suppose it will come back again.'

It came back again with strange suddenness. It burst from the well in a jet of water, and splashed Ianthe all over.

'Harry, my dear love,' exclaimed Ianthe, 'there is something dreadful I am sure. Do let us go out of this horrid cavern. Look at the light, how dim it is! Look at that strange water! I am sure something horrid is going to happen!'

Chessington consoled her as well as he could, but felt himself that there was something a little out of order. He did not expect an earthquake. He led Ianthe back toward the mouth of the cavern, where they found Sir Arthur and Rosalind. There was no egress. The earthquake had shaken down a mighty rock which completely blocked the way. What was to be done?

The girls got dreadfully frightened, of course. They made up their minds at once—foolish children—that they must be starved to death. Lord Chessington was of a different opinion, and so was Sir Arthur. The rock which had

descended in front of the entrance was perfectly immovable; but they thought there might be some other way out—and at any rate their difficulty would be discovered before they were entirely starved to death. Herein, as we have already perceived, their expectations were verified.

Chessington had gone off into the dark cavernous interior, to see if he could find some other outlet; and Sir Arthur Murray was doing his utmost to console the two little girls—when Lydiard and his friend reached the mouth of the cavern. For a moment Launcelot fancied he had made a mistake, and come to the wrong place; but he soon saw that the fall of rock was new, and began to understand what had happened. He called out loudly, and was at once answered by Sir Arthur Murray.

'What's to be done?' he said to Ned Goddard.

'What size is the cavern?'

'Immensely large.'

'Are there any mines near here?'

'There's Wheal Something within a mile.'

'All right. Then they are sure to have some blasting-powder. You know the way; start at once and bring powder and some fellows who know how to use it. I'll stay here and do my best to console the prisoners.'

It must I think be admitted that it is rather hard on a man to have his lady love shut into the very core of the earth, and to be unable to get near her. Launcelot thought so. To be shut up with her—which was Lord Chessington's case—was not quite so unsatisfactory.

●However, Launcelot was better off than Lord Chessington, seeing that he had to go at the top of his speed to Wheal Something for help. Gentle reader, let me assure you

that there are few medicaments equal to walking at your fastest pace. If your wife or your best friend has deserted you, if your last book has been severely flannelled by some severe critic, if you find yourself in some inextricable scrape, just pull yourself together, and walk for two or three hours at the rate of five miles an hour. You will find your brain work, after that. You will find yourself in superb condition.

Launcelot got across to the Wheal Something—about two miles—in a miraculously brief time. Very luckily, the first man he ran against was the 'Captain.' Still more luckily, Captain Anstis was a man who knew something both of chemistry and engineering, and who was very fond of conquering difficulties.

May I digress for a moment? Alfred de Vigny says somewhere or other that the great qualification of a first-class soldier is the love of danger. This is a Frenchman's way of looking at war—in the days when there were Frenchmen. But I certainly think that the Englishman's master passion is a love of difficulty. Tell him a thing's impossible—he'll do it. How else would the people of this small island have conquered India? How else would they have been the world's greatest power?

'Yes,' says Captain Anstis, when Launcelot had described what had happened, 'I know all about it. We've had an earthquake: there's no doubt about that. I felt it: it rang all the bells in my house. Well, you say it has shaken down that rock above the Vision Tor. Why not? There it might stay, as long as you please: only you say there are some human beings inside. Human beings differ in value; you tell me there are two young ladies, and a young earl, and an old baronet. I don't know that I

'are much about the earl and the baronet, but when there are pretty girls in the case it's a serious matter. Yes, it's a case of chloride of nitrogen.'

Launcelot was impatient, and listened carelessly to this disquisition. When Anstis had finished he exclaimed abruptly,

'Can you help me?'

'Why, of course I can help you,' said Captain Anstis. 'I thought I'd been telling you how. Chloride of nitrogen. Come along.'

He led Launcelot back into the mine. At a whistle, one of the miners came to him: he gave him some brief directions, and in a few minutes there were half a dozen energetic-looking fellows waiting in front of the captain's little office. You know the Ottershire miner and wrestler, of course: five feet high, four feet across the back, with arms a yard long, and the lowest possible centre of gravity. You can't upset a man of that build. A group of these fellows were waiting for Captain Anstis.

He, meanwhile, was making his preparations.

'We'll take some blasting-powder, of course,' he said, 'but the real thing is chloride of nitrogen. This is it,' he went on, with a loving look at some oily-yellow globules in a glass tube. 'This is it. Pass chlorine gas through ammonia; it takes up the nitrogen; hydrogen disappears. Grand explosive—blow that blessed old rock into the day after to-morrow.'

Launcelot began to think this mining captain either maniacal or ebrious. However, there seemed no other help, so he did his best to keep him up to the mark. He and his myrmidons, armed with various chemical and mechanical implements, started for Vision Tor at their swiftest pace. It seemed slow to Launcelot, horribly slow:

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I wonder how much slower it seemed to the four prisoners in that hideous cavern.

The entry was reached at length. Captain Anstis, after careful inspection, announced his intention to try the chloride of nitrogen.

'The cavern's pretty deep, you say,' he said to Launcelot.

'Very deep.'

'Then tell your friends to go away right to the back of it. And do you go away to the opposite hill.'

Launcelot obeyed orders. The captain sent his own men off to a distance also. Then he arranged his favourite preparation, connected it with a fuse, and lay flat on the ground in the most sheltered position he could find near.

There was just an instant's expectation. To Launcelot that instant, immeasurable in its brevity, seemed longer than any year of his life. But in time it came to an end.

A great sound filled his ears. A mass of rock was thrown high in air as if by a volcanic eruption. For a moment it seemed as if all the great tors of the Ottermoor were shaken to their very foundations. Then, after the tremendous explosion, there was silence, and Launcelot, running across to the cavern, saw that the fallen rock had been blown into a myriad fragments. He entered the cave, and met Sir Arthur and Lord Chessington and the two girls emerging from their imprisonment.

'By heaven!' exclaimed Sir Arthur, 'what a luxury to see the light again if by accident you lose it for a moment. There is nothing in the world like the blessed light of the sun.'

As they went down the hill Launcelot turned to look for Anstis. One of the miners came up to him and took him aside.

'Don't tell the young ladies,

sir,' he said, 'but I'm afraid it's all up with the captain.'

And sure enough poor Anstis had fallen a victim to his zeal for science. He had thrown himself flat when he ignited the fuse: a huge mass of rock, ascending to a considerable height, had come down on his back and broken his spine. The poor fellow was as dead as a door-nail. Launcelot was inexpressibly shocked, but he followed the miner's advice and said nothing to the girls. That evening, however, he told Sir Arthur and Lord Chessington, and they went over to poor Anstis's funeral, and, finding that he was unmarried and left no relation but a sister, the Earl and Launcelot gave her a thousand pounds each. A good dowry for the Ottershire damsel, but no compensation for the loss of so brave a brother. Bernard Anstis died a martyr to his faith in chloride of nitrogen.

* * * * *

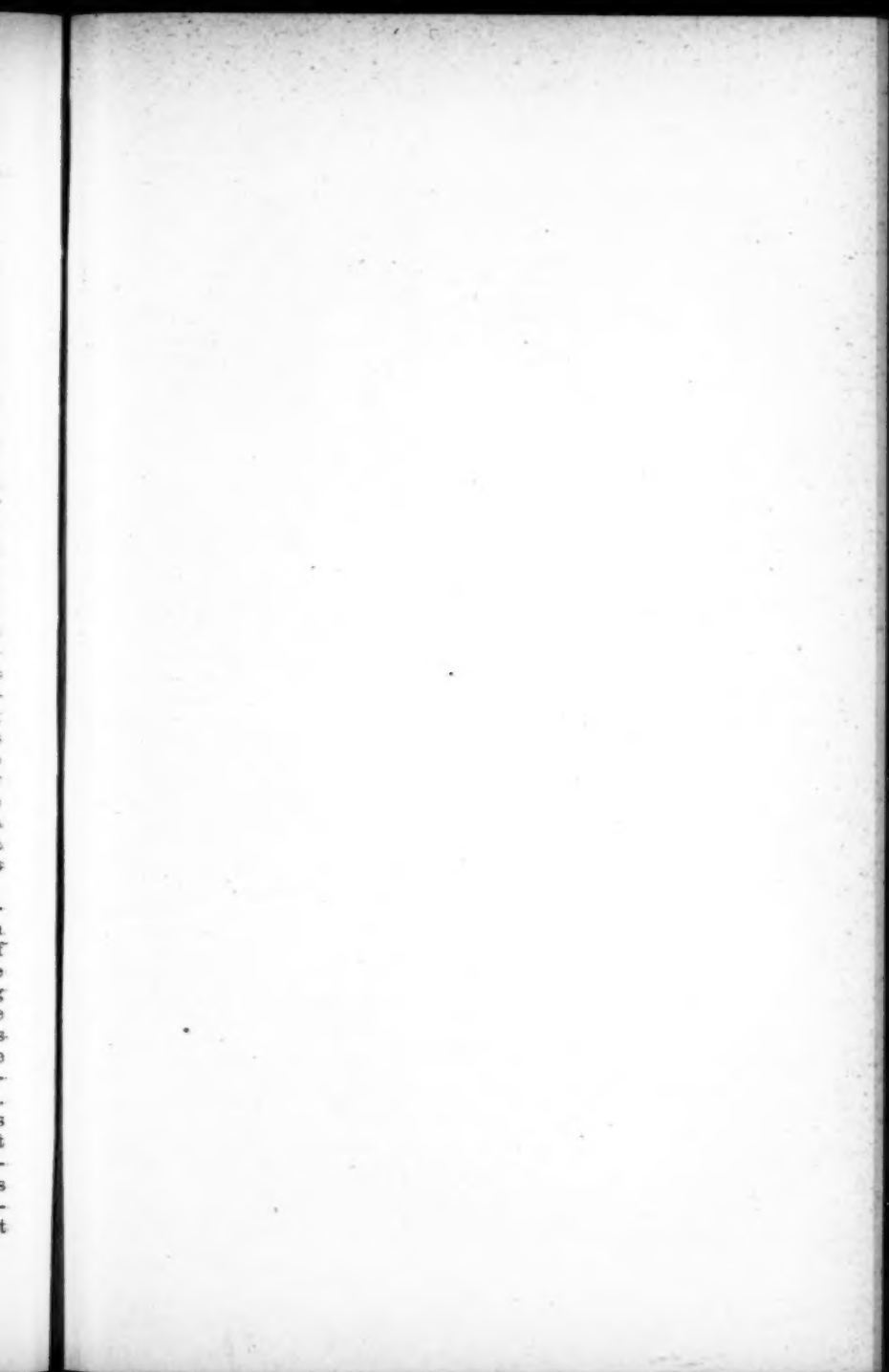
Two or three delicious days, each more indolently delicious than the former, passed on the Ottermoor. Chessington and Ianthe understood each other, that was evident. Launcelot and Rosalind had not yet reached an understanding. But the happy moment came at last—and of course under curious circumstances.

The five young folk had been out on a long excursion. Chessington and Ianthe had a rascally habit of losing their companions, and coming home at irregular times. On the present occasion this happened—and of course Launcelot and Rosalind didn't like it, at least if they did they didn't say so. As to poor Ned Goddard, he was obliged to walk off alone and write sonnets. Our lovers found themselves at a point in the river Otter where it is quieter than usual, where its brown waters flow

very silently under the shadow of dense woodlands. It was an exquisite afternoon of early summer. It was indeed the very time for a love scene or a love song. Why are the poets so fond of love stories? Why is love the chief theme of imaginative writing? Why do we deify woman? The answer is simple. Not appetite, not passion, but the desire for that *completion* which Plato long ago indicated as the necessity of human happiness. In marriage you want to find your complement. I have found mine, but I don't know many others who have found theirs.

But I digress. Launcelot and Rosalind were at this particular bend of the river Otter. The stream was dark brown. The trees dipped their boughs in it, and seemed to delight in the immersion. There were some rickety stepping-stones, for at this point it was necessary to cross the stream. About stepping-stones there is always something pleasantly picturesque. I always think of the innumerable pretty ankles which during many years have flashed across them. If anybody will seriously maintain that there is harm in poetic admiration of a pretty ankle, I can only wish them speedy exit to a world where cakes and ale are unknown.

They had to cross the stepping-stones, these twain. With them it had ceased to be a question of ankles. When people love one another, or even think of loving one another, trivial coquetties are over. It would be well if this thing could be taught to the little girls who read novels for instruction in the famous science of erotic. Unhappily the majority of novels are written by persons who do not possess even elementary knowledge of that science, which is as if a book on arithmetic were written by some one who could not





Drawn by F. W. Lawson, I

TWO PLUNGES FOR A PEARL.

"How do you like Chesington?"

[See Page 403.]

understand that seven times nine ought to be sixty-three.

Rosalind and Launcelot found the opposite side of the river a slope of soft green turf beneath the boughs of a mighty oak tree. They were tired, or at any rate they were lazy. The wind whispered in the great boughs of the oak, and the brown water of the river murmured musically at their feet. Rosalind might, like her namesake, have been in Arden's old forest, so silent was the woodland, so calm the breeze. The only sound was the happy war of the whist, and the busy hum of a brown squirrel that looked down inquisitively upon the lovers. Rosalind sat down under the tree and poked at the turf with her closed parasol; Launcelot stretched himself at her feet and looked up questioningly into her dreamy eyes. For awhile they were silent. At last Launcelot suddenly said,

"How do you like Chessington?"

Rosalind slightly blushed, surprised by the abruptness of the question.

"I think he is very charming," she answered.

"He?" said Launcelot, laughing mischievously. "Oh, you were thinking of the Earl. I meant the village from which he takes his title, and which I am very fond of."

Rosalind blushed more, and looked prettier than ever.

"You like Chessington," she said.

"Yes, indeed; I think it one of the loveliest villages in England. Look here, Miss Murray; what do you think of this photograph?"

He produced from his breast pocket the treasured picture of Lord Murray's cottage. Rosalind looked at it, and her eyes filled with tears.

"How like!" she exclaimed. "When was that taken, Mr. Lyndard?"

"A year or two ago," he said. "It was taken by my friend Goddard one summer evening when he and I were out on a ramble. I fear we committed a trespass for the night was locked, and we were impudent enough to stick over it."

Rosalind started. Then she looked at the picture, then she looked at Launcelot.

"Do you know, Mr. Lyndard, I believe I saw you here once upon a time?"

"Yes, I have sometimes seen you. When was the summer of your youth?"

She pointed at it with her delicate finger.

"Look at it through this," he said, giving her a pocket lens.

She did as she was told, and made an ejaculation of surprise when she found that the engraver revealed a figure at the window.

"Was that me?" she said.

"It must have been. I did not find it out till afterwards. Then I fell in love with your likeness, and resolved to find you. And then, you know, I would have written to you and begged you to come and see me. But I was so shy, and you were so busy, that I never did so."

"You are quite a truant, then," she replied. "Mayn't I take a way of my own?" It was an odd fancy of Rosalind's to put a little euphony (I suppose) into the monosyllabic abbreviation *mayn't*, and thus make a dissyllable of it.

But the way in which she spoke, though 'twas a polished speech she made, satisfied Launcelot; he laughed gaily and said,

"Mayn't I be, a tyrant? Let me offer you some slight compensation for my tyranny. Do you like that cottage at Chessington?"

"O, luncheon and I loved it. We were so happy there before papa."



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He produced from his breast pocket the treasured picture of Lionel Murray's cottage. Rosalind looked at it, and her eyes filled with tears.

'How like!' she exclaimed.

'When was that taken, Mr. Lydiard?'

'A year or two ago,' he said. 'It was taken by my friend Goddard one summer morning when he and I were out on a ramble. I fear we committed a trespass, for the gate was locked, and we were impudent enough to climb over it.'

Rosalind started. Then she looked at the picture, then she looked at Launcelot.

'Do you know, Mr. Lydiard, I believe I saw you take that picture?'

'Yes, I have evidence of that. Which was the window of your room?'

She pointed at it with her dainty finger.

'Look at it through this,' he said, giving her a pocket lens.

She did as she was told, and made an ejaculation of surprise when she found that the magnifier revealed a figure at the window.

'Was that me?' she said.

'It must have been. I did not find it out till afterwards. Then I fell in love with your likeness, and resolved to find you. And then, you know, I found your sister, Ianthe, and fancied it was the lady of the window. But I know better now. I have found you at last, Rosalind, and I won't let you go.'

'You are quite a tyrant, sir,' she replied. 'Mayn't I have a way of my own?' It was an odd fancy of Rosalind's to put a *t* (for euphony I suppose) into the monosyllabic abbreviation *mayn't*, and thus make a dissyllable of it.

But the way in which she spoke, though 'twas a petulant speech she made, satisfied Launcelot: he laughed gaily and said,

'Mayn't I be a tyrant? Let me offer you some slight compensation for my tyranny. Do you like that cottage at Chessington?'

'O, Ianthe and I loved it. We were so happy there before papa.

died. It is a small place, but very pleasant.'

'Will you accept it as a present from me? A wedding present, if you like.'

'But is it yours? And when shall I want a wedding present?'

'It is mine. I bought it long ago. And you will want a wedding present when you accept me, won't you?'

Our friend Launcelot had by this time got hold of the pretty child's hand, and was making her apprehend that he was very much in earnest.

'It was very good of you to buy that cottage, Mr. Lydiard. What do you mean to do with it?'

'I thought of having it furnished as nearly as possible as it was in your father's lifetime, and keeping it ready for either you or your sister at any time when you had a fancy for going there. You know I have more money than I can possibly spend, Rosalind, so you and I can have our little extravagances.'

'Upon my word, Mr. Lydiard, you assume very suddenly that I am to do what you tell me.'

'You can disobey if you like,' he replied; 'but be serious, and tell me if you don't think it will be nice to keep up the cottage in your father's honour. I have some relations at Chessington, you know, not very intelligent folk, but pleasant in their way.'

'I think you are very good, Mr. Lydiard,' she said, shyly.

'I don't agree with you. I am not good at all, but only selfish. I want to make you happy, and this I thought might help to do it.'

'O,' said Rosalind, 'I am very happy!'

'Are you, indeed? Well, I hope I help to make you so.'

'You do really, Mr. Lydiard.'

'Then perhaps you'll reward me by occasionally calling me Launce-

lot, and allowing me to call you Rosalind.'

'I think you have done that without my leave,' she answered.

'Have I? Well, you must please forgive me. I have known you much longer than you have known me. I stole your picture one sweet summer morning when dew was bright upon your lawn at Chessington, and you were caught there at the open window and put on glass by the instantaneous Voigtlander, and I have kept you ever since so close to me that you seem quite a part of my existence.'

'You are the whole of mine,' said Rosalind, softly.

I don't know that the pretty confabulation of two lovers is a thing to be exposed to the public gaze. The situation is manifest. There they are, Rosalind and Launcelot, two nice-looking young people, under a mighty tree, with the loveliest river in the world flowing in lyric movement at their feet. They chatter nonsense; they will go on chattering nonsense, without doubt, until the sun goes down, and the air gets a trifle chilled, and the gentleman (ladies don't stoop to such necessities) begins to want his dinner. Then they get up and walk home, and are perhaps a little shy of all they have said. But the thing comes right eventually. It takes them some time to understand each other. It is quite as well that it should, since repentance at leisure is eminently unsatisfactory.

A scientific analysis of marriage would perhaps be useful. There is the marriage made because it will bring two estates into a ring fence: that, I suppose, is generally successful, since, if two people don't happen to love one another, they can generally tolerate each other on twenty thousand a year. There is the marriage made by

accident: Mr. A. wants to marry somebody, and so does Miss B., and they happen to come together: of course they will have the rest of their respective lifetimes wherein to discover each other's failings. There is the marriage of repulsion: two people hate one another cordially, and are attracted thereby. I am not certain that such marriages may not be ultimately fortunate. There is the marriage of love; but love's a lottery. The difficulty here is that Amandus does not fall in love with Amanda, but with an ideal creature based by his imagination upon Amanda, and in exactly the same way Amanda misconceives and magnifies Amandus. Hence it often occurs that Amandus and Amanda get very tired of each other when they are living with several babies in a small house in Amandum Terrace, Notting Hill.

However, we must wait for the scientific treatment of such questions. When the novel goes out of fashion—which surely ought to occur soon, since already it has lasted longer than the Greek tragedy—I have some hope that the science of casuistry will be revived. It would have an excellent effect: it would greatly reduce divorce cases, and the amount of conscience money sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

* * * * *

Sir Arthur Murray had to surrender his two little girls. He was induced to leave the Ottermoor cottage and take up his residence at Chessington. At first, we may be sure, he found it dull, but Launcelot made the place perfect in all its arrangements, and the old gentleman felt pleasure in doing it because Rosalind and Ianthe loved the place so well. Moreover, when the two marriages were over—marriages which I don't mean to describe—Sir Arthur

found considerable pleasure in the company of Mr. Wissett. That quaint old lawyer, whose cranium was full of heraldry, genealogy, archæology, came down to Chessington, was delighted with his entertainment, and came again very often. Sir Arthur took to him kindly, and they thoroughly enjoyed each other's society.

Did Ianthe make a pretty countess? Did she not? Did she carry out her scheme of making amateur theatricals more charming, more original, more artistic, than ever they had been made before? Yes, unquestionably. At Chessington Castle there were perfect entertainments of this sort, wherein the pretty countess took the chief part. Perhaps the best thing ever done was a kind of parody of the 'Comedy of Errors.' It was written by a certain poet, one Launcelot Lydiard, who might have gone in for greater things if Miss Glossop had not enriched him. Launcelot's notion was ingenious, and amazed the country gentry, who knew nothing at all of the Countess of Chessington's twin sister. There were two heroines in the comedy, and they were supposed to be exactly alike, a fantasy whereof our beloved Shakespeare was fond; and they occasionally appeared in masculine disguise. But until the last scene of the last act they did not appear together, for Rosalind was no actress, and the countess had to do the business of both characters. When, at the very end, Rosalind also appeared on the scene, the sisters being dressed so exactly alike that you could not tell them apart, there was an amazing sensation.

When, in a story, everybody has done his or her duty in the way of marriage, writer and reader begin to get tired of the whole affair. All the mysteries have ex-

hailed; all the enigmas are solved; all the handsome men and pretty girls are married and settled. What more can possibly happen? Down with the curtain, and let the orchestra play 'God save the Queen' villanously out of tune. It is thus that the casual reader feels on matters of this kind. What is wanted is a surprise in the last scene; but, though life is full of surprises, authorship isn't, unless indeed there are people weak enough to be surprised by the idiocy of authors.

I am sorry to say that I have no surprise in this final chapter of mine. In truth, after a careful study of life, I begin to believe that there are less surprises in it than one imagines. An intimate friend of mine, our best living novelist, as I take it, scolds me severely on my method of writing. Here are his objurgations.

'You remember the order in which Aristotle places the constituents of excellence in a play. Μῦθος, ἦθος, δαίνοια, λέξις, μελοποιία and ὄψις. Well, we have made the last the first; and a house on fire, or a moonlit bridge, beats every other question. I dare to doubt whether μῦθος ought to come first; I think ἦθος should, but at any rate λέξις (which is your strong point) cannot atone for the want of the rest. Δαίνοια you have also, and lots of it; but of μῦθος you have none, and of ἦθος very little, and what you have is bad. Can't you describe any average man without exaggeration? Can't you make your people talk without being epigrammatic?'

I agree with my critic that ἦθος should precede μῦθος; indeed it is always on this principle that I write. I put my characters together, and let them work out a story as best they can. Behold the result! At the same time I think that there is some satisfac-

tion in feeling that one can't help being epigrammatic—there are such a lot of fellows who can help it.

If Ianthe made a charming countess—which everybody admitted—it was also generally acknowledged that Rosalind did excellent well in her special sphere. It was a quieter one, of course. Lord Chessington had to be frequently before the public; had to attend that uncomfortable board-meeting known as the House of Lords; had, in various ways, to illustrate the adage *Noblesse oblige*. He did it all very well, but it was a bore. There is nothing in this world so pleasant as being a commoner in England. I always pity the unfortunate gentlemen whom I notice in the papers as being knighted or baroneted or transmogrified into peers. They have to carry a tail behind them, so to speak. I dare say if Her Majesty were particularly anxious to make me an earl, I might think a little before I decided; but the decision would be adverse. The noblest position that a man can hold is to be above all titles.

* * * * *

There came a day of grief to Ianthe and Rosalind, to Launcelot and Lord Chessington. Sir Arthur Murray died. He fulfilled the poet's desire, in the famous invocation to Night:

'When dying I go forth to the unseen Powers,
Be it in the calmest time of all thy quiet hours.'

He died at midnight. All who loved him were present. At the last moment he turned on his pillow toward Lord Chessington.

'The feud between our families is over,' he said. 'I can already see Horatio awaiting my arrival in another world. You have been very good to me and mine, Ches-

sington, and I shall remember it. Good-bye for the present, Launcelot.'

I often wonder whether there is actual prevision in these death-bed utterances. Are we to suppose that Sir Arthur Murray really saw Horatio Marden on the other side Styx? Are we to suppose that he knew he should meet Launcelot Lydiard again? For my own part, when a man of the higher and nobler type dies, I am anxious to weigh every word that falls from his lips.

For many a year the cottage at Chessington of Lionel Murray the essayist was a frequent and regular meeting place for the two sisters and their families. (Families, of course: your delicate novelist doesn't hint such things, but somehow or other they occur.) They usually came there in the autumn: at other times they did not often meet. Lord Chessington was forced into political life, and his wife was at the same forced into the higher circles of society. Neither of them liked it, but the thing had to be done. Launcelot, on the other hand, took a pleasant mixture of yachting and poetry. It took some

time to teach Mrs. Lydiard that sea-sickness is preventible by champagne; but, that great fact being established, she heartily enjoyed her voyages in the Mediterranean, and up into the Adriatic, and amid the Cyclades and Sporades.

It was just five years after the death of Sir Arthur Murray when the two sisters managed to meet in their father's cottage. Each of them had with her a scion of the ancient stock. Ianthe's, unluckily, was a girl; Rosalind's was a boy, and a very big boy for his age.

'If earldoms are abolished,' said Launcelot to Lord Chessington, 'this youngster of mine will be lucky. I have called him Chessington Lydiard.'

'An excellent name,' said the Earl. 'For my own part, I have christened my little girl Rosalind Ianthe. I hope she will unite the charming qualities of both sisters. Still, you know, I should like to have an heir to the earldom.'

'Will there be any earls or earldoms when our children come of age?' asked Launcelot Lydiard.

But what's an earldom? what's an earl? When Launcelot has found his pearl.



OUR JUDGES.

THE character of an English judge is invested with a peculiar degree of sanctity and importance. There is the respect which we all naturally give to unflinching labour and talent, which have won a high reward. Beyond this we naturally regard them as men who have the greatest material interests in their keeping, and who are inflexibly guided by the standard of the most rigorous equity. The bench of judges is encompassed by much the same kind of feeling as the bench of bishops. For our own parts we should be glad if they all had seats in the Upper House, which would be doing honour to the judicature, and prove a strengthening of the House of Lords. Our judges move freely about and enjoy life and society, although we need hardly say that it would be the worst solecism to bring the courts into company. An American writer says that there is much more ease and freedom between bench and bar in England than would be permitted in America. Also, our public writers almost fiercely scrutinise their conduct when they come within the scope of legitimate criticism. This is the way in which the 'Saturday Review' permits itself to speak of Lord Penzance, in reference to his support of a bill of which the reviewer disapproved: 'The learned judge took up a cause already sufficiently discredited; he conducted it without tact and without dignity, and in its collapse he has dragged it down to the vulgar level of a howling democratic agitation.' But there is no need of a Star Chamber to maintain the character of any English judge. They eminently possess

tact and dignity, and it has always been a tradition of their office to avoid any gale of popular applause, as the very sirocco poison itself. England, unlike other lands, commands the very highest legal character and ability for its bench, and beneath the freshness and freedom of its courts there are inexorable lines which no man dares transgress. We shall now gather together some notes on the ways of English judges, which will be made with that free discussion and real reverence, which equally suit the genius of our tradition of English judges. Whatever trickeries and insincerities belong to the bar, they seem wonderfully to vanish when a man attains to the bench.

One day Lord Campbell was sitting next Chief Baron Pollock. At that time they were both members of the House of Commons. 'Pollock,' quoth Campbell, 'we lawyers receive the highest wages of an infamous profession.' It is a sad thing for a lawyer—a sad thing for any man—when he does not believe in his own work. They were then barristers, and would hardly speak in this way when judges. Lord Campbell was in many respects a great judge, but he did much to debase and attack the character of English judges. Lord Erskine owned that the most discreditable passage in his life was becoming Lord Chancellor. It must be owned, to the disgrace of the English bench, that there have been judges in equity who have been almost totally ignorant of the law which they professed to administer. The following is Pemberton Leigh's, Lord Kingsdown's withering language on the subject: 'Unfortunately, the claim to those

high offices has been supposed to remain, when the qualifications for them have ceased. Lord Erskine, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Brougham, and Lord Campbell, all undertook the highest judicial office in Chancery, without ever having had the slightest practice there, and without any knowledge of the science, on the exposition of which millions of property were to depend.' Lord Thurlow regularly employed an able man to draw up his legal judgments for him. This reproach at the present day is very completely wiped away. The Equity Bench is especially strong. The Lord Chancellor was not, as so often has been disastrously the case, a member of the Common Law Bar. All the equity judges are comparatively recent appointments, and their appointments gave the highest satisfaction to the Equity Bar. The Lords Justices—James and Mellish—are profoundly learned men. Vice-Chancellor Malins has had before him cases of historical interest and importance, such as the Overend and Gurney case. And his decisions have had paramount authority. Vice-Chancellor Wickens' name was little known to the public; but he is a man who eminently conciliates the confidence of the Chancery Bar. Vice-Chancellor Bacon is a judge of whom all men say all good things, who, by sheer force of merit, took his place as a Vice-Chancellor, instead of remaining a mere judge of the Bankruptcy Court. Before the number of Chancery judges was increased, Launcelot Shadwell oddly said that *three angels* could not get through it. We need hardly say that the Lord Chancellor is one of the greatest equity judges that ever lived.

When we look at a numerous bar in any important case, we can generally pick out a few men who

are likely to be judges. It sometimes strikes an outsider that there are a supernumerary lot of counsel employed, and that they are put on for the profits of the lawyers, and the respectability of clients. But barristers have their special gifts, and a long involved case brings them all into play. One man has unrivalled powers of statement; another is sound in law; another excels in cross-examination; another in reply; another has the ear of the court, or is all persuasive with the jury. From men of such rich gifts come the judges. If a barrister goes in for politics as well as law, he has a chance of more speedy promotion, and of promotion to a higher place. Many a good man is kept back, and perhaps a great judge lost, from the circumstance that he has no seat in parliament. At one time this political element threatened seriously to lower the character of the British bench. There was a great dearth of lawyers on the part of the Liberals. Great lawyers are generally great Tories, impressed by their whole course and tenour of mind, with a veneration for property, and an adherence to existing institutions. Lawyer after lawyer was made Solicitor-General by Lord Palmerston apparently for little better reason than that he had a safe seat in parliament, and such men grasped a judgeship as being probably their only chance. At last there comes a turn of the tide, in the accession of the Derby-Disraeli ministry, and there was a perfect avalanche of legal changes, which gave each leading Conservative lawyer a chance. The changes were most marked in the Equity Courts, whence Rolt and Selwyn soon vanished, but the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, were political appointments. It

is curious that Mr. Bovill was engaged in a case that bore a remarkable resemblance to the Tichborne case, over which he presided. We believe Sir Fitzroy Kelly had almost retired from actual practice at the bar, except chamber-business, when this great piece of promotion came to him, at a time when he was so heavy a loser in the Agra and Masterman's Bank. It will be remembered how strenuously he exerted himself to put things on a satisfactory basis. He was one of the greatest advocates of the British forum. It was long remembered against him how the tears trickled down his innocent nose when he defended Tawell the Quaker—the first time that the electric telegraph was brought into action for the detection of crime, and Sir Fitzroy—if any man—could have helped off a murderer from his doom. The Chief Baron fills his place nobly, and is greatly beloved and esteemed. He has a dry humour of his own, and can amuse his court. The specimens of judicial wit are not very striking, however. A prosecutrix in a criminal case at the Suffolk Assizes, resorted to the expression 'I said to myself,' so frequently as to excite some merriment. 'Mrs. Taylor,' said the Chief Baron, 'you must not tell us what you said to yourself, unless the prisoner was by.' But the fact is, that the monotony and tedium of trials is so very great, that the slightest touch of the ludicrous is eagerly caught at, and made the very most of. Old Maule was the judge of whom all kinds of stories were told. We have all heard how he brought himself down to the level of the other judges. Here is a curious circumstance which happened to Maule. He tried an old woman at Haverfordwest once, who was

acquitted by the perversity of a Welsh jury, in spite of a tolerably clear direction from the judge to the contrary. Going circuit some time afterwards, he stopped at a country town to change horses. An old woman spied him as he was sitting alone in the carriage; it was a former prisoner recognizing the judge. She shook her fist in his face, and gave him a storm of abuse, until the defenceless judge was opportunely rescued. Here is a converse anecdote. Sir Frederick Pollock going to court one day, recognised in a gorgeous gentleman attending the levée, a man who had been convicted of felony before him. He promptly interposed, and had the man sent about his business. Baron Alderson,—learned, gentle and good,—could make puns, and had much drollery. He interrupted a counsel who was using much barristerial insolence, 'Stop, sir, the Almighty wouldn't use such language to a black-beetle.' A juryman once said that he was deaf in one ear. 'Well, then,' said Alderson, 'you may leave the box, for it is necessary that jury-men should *hear both sides*.' Sometimes when two courts are close together, the disagreeable circumstance happens that a counsel thunders so loudly in one court, that he disturbs the business of the other. We have ourselves known this happen in the old Bailey Courts. Once at Buckingham, a Chief Justice addressing the grand jury heard a tremendous row in the Civil Court. Asking what the noise was, he was told that Serjeant ——— was opening a case. 'Very well,' said he, 'since Brother ——— is *opening*, I must *shut-up*,' and ordered all the doors to be closed. It is difficult to do justice to legal wit, just as it is hard to reproduce the mathematical wit of Cam-

bridge. For instance, there is a famous old joke (of Tindal, C.J., we think) about a restive horse, demurring when he should go to the country, which requires us to understand the term *demur*, and to know that going to the country means having a case tried by jury.

There are hardly any wags on the bench these days. People are terribly in earnest, and we all take serious views. Every now and then there is a joke. A witness was asked in court one day what Baron —— had said to him when he had made an application at Chambers. Whereupon the witness gave a grunt and a roar as the nearest way of reproducing the learned judge's remark. No judge is spoken of with greater affection than Baron Martin, who, himself, is equally affectionate to animals and men. The bench has undergone a further change in character which is not likely to improve its cheerfulness. Some time ago we had a Roman Catholic judge, and we have at least two judges who are Dissenters. Mr. Justice Mellor is one of those who have been prevented by his principles from following a University career. He is an admirable lecturer (the present Lord Chancellor used also to lecture) discoursing on Selden and on the Christian Church. Mr. Justice Lush is also an earnest-minded religious Dissenter. In the north country, with the alteration of a vowel, he got the name of Mr. Justice Lash. The law had added flogging to the punishment of garrotting, but the judges had not put the law into execution. Judges sometimes will not put law into motion, and sometimes they labour under the imputation of manufacturing law. Judge-made law is a well-known phrase. Mr. Justice Lush is understood to have de-

clared that he would certainly flog garotters if he had the chance, and he accordingly set a wholesome precedent which has been generally followed.

Then there are immense differences in judges. I have heard of a judge, who, when he has to try a capital case, feels very ill and has to go to bed. Another man may feel even a grim sort of pleasure in the black cap. I have heard of a judge who was very fond of his work. When a friend expressed a hope that he was not fatigued by the labours of a very heavy day, he answered, 'Oh no, not at all; *I like it.*' Other judges are very fond of their holidays. I have heard of a judge who nearly let the judicial business of the country come to a standstill rather than forego one of his holidays. Some judges are immensely fond of their work. After Lord Mansfield had retired he delighted to talk over every important case of the day with a certain barrister, and that barrister became a great judge. Lord Mansfield was very kind to the bar. When his court sat very late on one occasion, he addressed the counsel, 'Gentlemen, as you have lost your dinners you had better come and dine with me.' Judges are very good in asking young barristers of their acquaintances to dinner, but such *bonhomie* as Lord Mansfield's it would be hard to find now.

Some men don't like to be judges. They would prefer to continue advocates. This seems to have been the case with Sir Alexander Cockburn. 'As Attorney-General for England and your Member, I had nothing more to wish,' he told the electors of Southampton. Lord Kingsdown says in his 'privately printed' autobiography, 'I had always a great distaste for judicial office, which I never hesitated to declare,

and I have often since been reminded of it; I have never once regretted having declined the promotion to the bench which at different periods has been offered to me.' Lord Lyndhurst offered him a puisne judgeship, which he declined, and Sir J. T. Coleridge was most happily nominated in his place. Other men there are to whom the bar has been irksome and unattractive, to whom the whole English system of advocacy has been distasteful and objectionable, and who make admirable judges. There was a country clergyman, who, for many years, was Chairman of Quarter's Sessions, whose decisions were much respected and who was an admirable judge. Many Indian civilians turn out capital judges, and fully win the respect of the natives by the way in which they see through conflicting perjuries. The two archbishops and the Bishop of London make capital judges in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Lord Salisbury has been worthily associated with Lord Cairns as arbitrator or judge. In fact, the qualities which make a great judge are often very distinct from those which make a great advocate, and it is perhaps to be regretted that the way to the bench lies generally through the avenue of prosperous advocacy. When men, comparatively unknown to the public, though not to the profession, have been appointed, they have approved themselves to be great judges. Colin Blackburn wore a stuff gown, and few people heard of him, when he was sagaciously promoted by his countryman, Lord Campbell, and is probably the greatest lawyer in the court which he adorns. Mr. Justice Willes is an example of the same kind. Mr. Justice Hannen is perhaps another, though as Attorney-General's 'Devil,' he was

widely known to the profession. The familiarity of a man's name with the public is no proof of the true place which he holds in the estimation of the profession. There are men making ten thousand a-year who are much less known to the public, than men who make only two or three. But the public are not well informed on such matters, and the guides of the public are often blindfold and lead them into a ditch. Thus one of the daily papers gravely assured their readers that Mr. Sergeant Ballantine never undertook a cause of the justice of which he was not convinced. We are afraid that London solicitors would hardly permit the worthy sergeant or any other learned counsel to make such an election.

The going circuit is a great expense to a judge, generally exacting a tithe of his income. In these expensive days it ought to be considered whether they might not very properly be relieved of such a burden. The judges have the privilege of appointing their marshals. The marshal gets all his expenses paid, and some fifty guineas, and has his seat in court by the side of the judge. It is a privilege very much sought for, and generally given to some young legal friend of the judge's, but it is not necessary that the marshal should be a lawyer. A judge has generally many friends on the circuit on which he was perhaps for many years the leader. He knows many families and is familiar with many interests. He makes friends, whose friendships he desires to retain, and who draw him into this part of the country. There is no more honoured or looked-for guest. Any one accustomed to watch the circuits of judges will see how like recurring decimals certain judges have a tendency to certain circuits. Of

course, according to the system of choosing circuits, no judge travels the same ground with much constancy, nor is it desirable that he should. The Midland is, we believe, thought the lightest, and the Western Circuit the most expensive. Again, a judge naturally likes to go into a part of the country where his relations live. It is a pleasant thing for a judge's relations, perhaps his sisters or married children, to drive over to the assize court, lunch with the father or brother, and sit near his judicial throne. I think a judge looks very nice when in his high office, he is able to show every token of affection and respect. There was a little stir one day in Lincoln's Inn, when a Vice Chancellor requested a gentleman who had strolled into the court to come up and take a seat upon the bench. At least he told the registrar to bear the message, who was disgusted at what he considered an unofficial proceeding. The stranger so deservedly honoured was Macaulay. In the Tichborne case there were prelates to be seen on the bench. Archbishop Trench, because he had once been vicar of an adjacent parish, and Bishop Wilberforce, we presume, because the disputed property lay in his diocese. The barristers were greatly aggrieved because they were shorn of their full privileges of admission. It is as important for sucking barristers to hear fine speeches and masterly examinations, as for medical students to go the round of the hospitals with the best surgeons of the day.

The judges can tell odd stories of going circuits. The functionaries, and sometimes even the prisoners, are much disgusted if instead of a Westminster judge they have to deal with some counsel whose name has been in-

cluded in the Commission. A prisoner for murder was greatly annoyed because he had to be tried by a 'journeyman judge.' A sheriff once told a judge that they had been 'often jobbed off with serjeants instead of judges in those parts, and was he really a *bonâ fide* judge?' Having had his mind satisfied on this point, the sheriff gracefully took his place by the side of the judge on the back seat, but was politely informed by the judge that etiquette required that he should sit opposite. Once a judge complementarily told a mayor that he presided over an ancient city. 'Yes, my lord,' was the answer; 'it always was an ancient city.' We expect it was the same gentleman who expressed a hope that Mrs. Judge, and all the little Judges were well. A sheriff asked a judge at a circuit dinner whether he had gone to see the elephant in the last place. 'Why, no, Mr. High Sheriff,' he replied, 'I cannot say that I did, for a little difficulty occurred; we both came into the town in form, with the trumpet sounding before us, and there was a point of ceremony to be settled which should visit first.'

There have been judges who have acquired certain little tricks and peculiarities of manner. This is rather a drawback to a judge. It is always especially necessary that there should be no trick of temper; that he be not a 'roarer.' A peculiarity which is said to have belonged to several judges is that of speaking aloud. There are two very awkward habits against which absent-minded men should guard—soliloquizing aloud when they walk, and walking when they are asleep. I know a man who actually had to pay damages for some very uncomplimentary remarks which he made on a neighbour, when he

was quite ignorant that he was really giving voice to his maledictions. He was known to talk aloud, and people dodged him to hear what he said. The other day I missed a friend with whom I had been walking in a country town, and inquired after him. 'Was it a man talking to himself, apparently deranged?' asked the honest tradesman to whom I was speaking. Country people generally set down any man who talks to himself as being a harmless lunatic. I remember the 'Times' in the lifetime of Lord Macaulay, alluding to his rolling along the streets, 'muttering half-aloud those sentences which were destined one day to astonish and delight the world.' As for the other thing, walking in one's sleep, a not inconsiderable amount of mortality has been due to this cause. Some absurd stories have been told of judges thinking aloud. The following story is told by one of the Registrars of the Court of Chancery of a great chancellor: 'A barrister, whom he had not previously heard, was retained to argue before him. The counsel was a man of ability, but began in a very confused floundering manner. Lord Chancellor: 'What a fool the man is!' After a while he got more cool and collected. Lord Chancellor: 'Ah! not such a fool as I thought.' Finally, he quite recovered himself and proceeded admirably. Lord Chancellor: 'Egad! It is I that was the fool.' It is a worse fault of a judge when he is supposed to be too much under the influence of some counsel. Thus Sir Fletcher Norton was notoriously a terror to the bench in his day. Lord Mansfield was thought to favour unduly men who, like himself, had been to Westminster and Christ Church. The great Lord Tenterden was supposed to

be fascinated like the juries by Scarlett—the Mr. Subtle of 'Ten Thousand a Year'—to whom he had often been a junior. Lord Westbury, when Mr. Bethell of the Bar, had an extraordinary influence with some judges, and also awoke extraordinary antagonisms.

But the worst faults a judge can have, is a short temper. We have in our mind's eye a learned judge and most excellent man, whose court was sometimes no better than a bear garden, through his unfortunate defect of temper and judgment. There was one judge who had a trick of checking witnesses when they got on too fast for his notes by saying, 'Stay, stay!' He was called the old staymaker. Ofttimes they show admirable temper and discretion. A judge who was summing-up a case was greatly disturbed by a young counsel who was talking aloud. With great benignity he said, 'Mr. Gray, if you ever arrive here, which some of these days I hope you will do, you will know the inconvenience of counsel talking while you are summing-up.' A curious story is told illustrating the legal precision of a great judge. He asked a magistrate on a circuit dinner whether he would take some venison. The gentleman answered, 'Thank you, my lord, I am going to take boiled chicken.' Lord Tenterden retorted, 'That, sir, is no answer to my question; I ask you again if you will take venison, and I will thank you to answer *yes* or *no*, without further prevarication.' The story was originally told in the 'Quarterly Review,' but it is challenged by Lord Campbell.

Another unfortunate characteristic of some judges is the extreme promptness with which they make up their minds and take a side on a case. There is a subtle atmosphere which soon tells

the advocate whether the court is with him or whether he has to fight the up-hill game of a losing cause. Counsel often watch with extreme anxiety even trivial utterances of the judges which may indicate the direction of their mind. The most upright and impartial judges, who endeavour to keep their judgment perfectly balanced, are liable, human nature being what it is, certainly and perhaps insensibly, to take a side. I believe they have left it on record that when a case has been fairly opened, and the testimony was given clearly, honestly and in a pleasing way, they had made up their minds on one side before they heard the other. Mr. Grote discusses this subject in one of the admirable notes to his immortal history. Wise judges watch against this tendency and are able to conquer it. Still, in the case of any protracted trial it is easy to see on which side the judge's opinions rest, and even his sympathies. With some judges the habit of advocacy has grown so inveterate that they have been quite unable to lay it aside. If ever they have seriously tried they have not succeeded in the attempt. The case has even been known of a judge on the bench thundering like an advocate at *Nisi Prius*. A judge once said that he had only *lost two verdicts* since he had been raised to the bench. What one likes to see in a judge is, a quiet vigilant watchfulness; the alert eye, the unwearying hand, the thoughtful composed manner. I have seen cases where, except to the initiated, the judge seemed little more than a passive spectator for a considerable portion of the case—but he would have interfered at any moment—and when his proper time came he showed how complete had been his grasp of the

case and how acute his attention to all details. An able judge once said, 'Nobody knows how much energy it requires in a judge to hold his tongue.' The most conspicuous example of an intellectual failure in fairness was Sir John Leach. He delighted to gallop through his cases. He was so fast that a stage-coach was named after him 'The Vice-Chancellor.' Almost as soon as a case was opened he decided against a plaintiff or a defendant, and never thoroughly heard it through. It was wondered what he would find to do after he had cleared his list off. 'Do! why he will hear the other side,' was the acute answer. This was indeed an egregious example—if the facts stated of him are true, and they are stated by Lord Kingsdown; and such a judge himself deserved the penalty of a criminal. Perhaps some of our best living judges have a decided touch of the advocate about them. But it must be said that this never involves any substantial failure of justice. A prepossession must necessarily arise, human nature being what it is, but any opinion is held in solution, to be modified or removed according to the facts which may be elicited. It is always worth while for barristers carefully to attend to the slightest indication of judicial opinion. I remember a case in an Equity Court in which the buying and selling of some living was concerned. When the case had made some progress the judge quietly observed, 'Does Simon Magus appear at all in the action.' The counsel at once told the solicitor that the judge evidently looked upon the transaction as one of simony, and the case was forthwith withdrawn.

But sometimes it is impossible to say in which way the opinion of the judge leans. My own im-

pression is that they have not been at the trouble of forming an opinion Charles Dickens has hit this off—as he hits off everything—capitally: ‘Mr. Justice Stoneleigh summed-up in the old-established and most approved form. He read as much of his notes to the jury as he could decipher on so short a notice, and made running comments on the evidence as he went along, If Mrs. Bardell were right it was perfectly clear that Mr. Pickwick was wrong, and if they thought the evidence of Mrs. Cluppins worthy of credence they would believe it, and if they didn’t, why they wouldn’t.’ If some judges are anxious to guide the jury, others are most anxious to evade the responsibility. They must save themselves a great deal of wear and tear. Still, in many cases provincial juries are so crassly stupid that they require to be guided unless there should be continual miscarriage of justice. One remedy would be that a large proportion of the cases now tried by juries should be summarily disposed of by judges. Another remedy would be that there should be a large infusion of the grand jury element in the petty jury. Cases are on record in which judges have confessed themselves mistaken. One judge thinking that he had caused an injustice to be done which it was beyond his power to rectify, left the injured person a large sum of money in his will. It is said that the case of Lord Cochrane, afterwards Earl of Dundonald, almost broke the heart and hastened the resignation and death of Lord Ellenborough. That great man and most upright magistrate had conceived a political prejudice against Lord Cochrane, and summed up violently against him. He afterwards saw good reason to believe that he had been mistaken in his facts, and

had been too harsh in his sentence.

Every now and then we have some neat biographic encomium on a judge, pronounced when he may have retired from office, or perhaps when he has passed away by death from the scene of his labours. Some of these addresses have been truly remarkable, as when Sir Robert Phillimore spoke of the death of Sir Cresswell Cresswell, and Sir Fitzroy Kelly of the retirement of Sir John Taylor Coleridge. Sir John Coleridge is of course the father of our distinguished Solicitor-General—another example of Devonshire being fertile in great lawyers. The retired judge has been an admirable Privy Councillor, and he has completely restored the beautiful church near his residence of Heath’s Court. Retiring judges have often set an example which might well be imitated by some who do not care to retire. It is not often that lawyers are visibly moved, but these farewell scenes have showed much genuine feeling and emotion. One great judge turned his face twice to the wall before he could articulate, and even then he could not refrain from tears. That very eloquent and regretted judge, Mr. Justice Shee, had once an opportunity of passing a splendid eulogium on the present Lord Chief Justice of England. ‘To say of him that he surpasses in the great and highest quality of a Chief Justice the high legal attainments of some of his predecessors, would be flattery of which I would not be guilty; but this I will venture to say, that he possesses qualities which have endeared him to us all, in which none of them have surpassed him . . . Most of all we like him, we respect him, we love him, for this, because, whenever he has occasion to reprove or rebuke—

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and no man in his position can be without having some occasion to reprove and rebuke—he takes care always to temper authority with gentleness, and to rebuke without giving pain.' Many of our judges have died in harness, their thoughts to the last being busy with their anxious earthly work. The gentle-hearted Talfourd died on the judgment-seat, with his last breath exhorting men to mutual sympathy and loving-kindness. Various similar instances could be given of judges dying in harness, or when just released from the traces. Mr. Justice Wightman on his last

Assize, came to York, where he found a very heavy calendar. It so happened that in the usual cathedral service the chaplain omitted the bidding prayer. 'There was no one in the minster,' said the aged judge, 'who more needed the prayers of the people than the judge who has this list of prisoners to dispose of.' Having tried a complicated case at these assizes he went home to bed, and died next day. The last words of that great chief justice, Lord Tenterden, were 'Gentlemen of the jury, you may now retire and consider your verdict.'



"CLINCHING AN ARGUMENT!"

SKETCHED AT A DEBATING SOCIETY, BY OUR RAPID ARTIST.

OMNIBUS REFORM.

IT is not a little remarkable that while the question of cab reform has occupied public attention ever since that remote period when the vehicle in question was invented, it is rare indeed that anything is written concerning the defective condition of our omnibus system.

That it is defective there can be no doubt. Unequal fares, lack of convenient sitting room, wet and evil-smelling straw and saturated umbrellas in the winter, and naked windows that convert the omnibus into an oven under the blazing sun of summer, provide the grumbler with fruitful topics of discourse with his fellow-travellers and sufferers; but somehow he seldom or never avails himself of the ever-open columns of the daily newspaper. To be sure, as marking the difference between the cab grumbler and the 'bus grumbler, there is this to be considered. The former, as a rule, is a solitary rider. For the time being the vehicle that contains his sacred person is his own. His absolutely to the termination of his contemplated journey, as though he had bought and paid for it and the horse in the shafts. Cabby on the box is as much his servant during the brief period of hiring as though he wore his fare's private livery. Therefore the latter looks about him with the eyes of an outraged proprietor. His indignant nose scents mustiness, his offended ear is keenly conscious of the draughts of cool air making their way through the cracked window. Gazing down the road, he perceives smarter cabs drawn by stouter and more respectable-looking horses than his own, and he feels that he is being imposed

upon, and sorely broods over his ill-treatment, and is fully prepared at his journey's end to find his coachman an insolent ruffian who will dispute the sufficiency of any sum tendered him. It is different with the 'bus rider.

In the first place, he is at best no more than a fourpenny or sixpenny shareholder in a joint-stock concern consisting of twenty-six members. In the second place, as already mentioned, he has ample opportunity for verbally making known his sense of personal injury. In short, he speaks his mind instead of writing it—not invariably to the disadvantage of mankind in general.

Still there can be no question that the London omnibus is by no means what it should be, and it is equally certain that the matter is one of sufficient importance to demand consideration. It should be borne in mind that in the hands of the 'London General' Company omnibus trade has become almost a monopoly. More than three-fourths of the vehicles in question are their property; and for the use of these alone the public pay annually the handsome sum of over *five hundred thousand pounds*. Virtually, indeed, the question of omnibus reform rests entirely with the company in question. Let us consider, then, what are the loose screws in that convenient machine called an omnibus.

But at our very starting-point the directors of the above-mentioned company step forward and present for our contemplation a screw of formidable dimensions, and one that the outside public can be expected to know nothing of. A rusty, crooked screw with a head so misshapen and ugly

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that no known 'screwdriver,' however keen and competent, was ever yet found equal to the task of efficiently directing it. 'This,' say the directors, 'is the screw on which the whole machine depends. We are fully alive to its imperfections, and would be only too willing to make it better if we only knew the way. The confounded thing plagues and impoverishes us continually. If you could point out to us the way to make this loose screw of ours upright instead of crooked, steadfast instead of treacherous, then indeed the task of reform you would impose on us we would undertake most cheerfully.'

And as we regard the catanquerous screw it assumes the shape of an omnibus conductor impudently engaged in transferring ten per cent. of his day's takings from his master's money-pouch to his own private pocket. 'He is but a fair example of the whole body,' say the directors, with a sigh. 'We are robbed of hundreds of pounds every week, and we can't help ourselves, try all we may.' This is indeed a startling revelation. Stand forward, oh most disreputable of screws, and meet, 'if thou canst, this terrible accusation that thy master bringeth against thee.

Loose screw, nothing abashed, and with a sprig of geranium adorning his guilty bosom, steps forward as invited.

'Sir,' says he, 'as for meeting the accusation with the view of quite refuting it, that mayn't be easy, since I'm bound to confess that I do help myself to a trifle occasionally, but it's a little too bad to call it robbery. It is an arrangement—an understood thing. It is a weakness with which all omnibus conductors are afflicted, and one that is recognized by our masters as inseparable from the profession. It enters into their

calculations when they settle what amount of wages shall be paid us. On account of our affliction we are paid two shillings less per day than the coachman on his driving-box, who is supposed to be raised above the ways of temptation. Yes, sir, I am paid four shillings a day. Not a bricklayer's or carpenter's 'day' of nine hours and a half, but a day that is always fourteen and occasionally *seventeen* hours. I am bound to be at the yard bright and clean at eight o'clock in the morning, and I am on duty constantly till ten at night, and not unfrequently till one o'clock the next morning. I am on duty through from six to eight journeys of twelve miles to and fro, or *ninety-six miles* every day of my life. I have no home, and know less of domestic felicity and fireside comfort than does a nigger on a sugar plantation. Would you like to know what my meal-times are? Although I seldom get to bed before one, I am up again by seven, and get a bit of breakfast before my day's work begins. A dinner-hour is a luxury that a 'bus conductor knows not. If I am a married man, I contrive to live on the line of route, and, as you may have seen, sir, my wife or my youngster will meet me on the road with my dinner in a cloth or basket, and I hop off the 'bus without its stopping and secure it, and on again. If I am lucky, when I arrive at the end of that journey I may have as long as a quarter of an hour, or even twenty minutes, in which to eat my meal; but if I am unlucky, and the road is blocked, or if the horses are queer and shys, my twenty minutes may be reduced to ten, or even five, for I must not lose time, or I am fined. My tea-time is equally a matter of chance, and supper I am too tired to think about.

'This is my daily life, Sundays as well as week-days, excepting now and then, by way of a treat, or that I may nurse a severe cold, I can prevail on an "odd man" to take my place on the Sabbath day. And I am expected to deal honestly by my taskmasters, and hand them over every farthing of my takings, short the fourpence an hour they pay me for my drudgery. Not I am not expected to do so, or the Company, would prosecute me if it detected me with my fingers in its purse. It knows what's going on, and what *must* go on under its present shambling hand-to-mouth system.'

When one considers how easily so serious a disfigurement of our existing omnibus system may be overcome, it appears the less pardonable that it should have been allowed to continue so long. It is more than doubtful if the public generally are aware of the almost unceasing life of drudgery endured by omnibus drivers and conductors. It certainly does seem odd that while on the one hand we have thousands and tens of thousands of labouring men insisting that they should be enabled to earn sufficient for the necessities and comfort of their families by an exercise of their handicraft during fifty-six hours in each week, there should be thousands of other men, not at all inferior to the first-mentioned as regards intelligence and mental culture, who are compelled to work exposed to all weather *more than double* as many hours.

A grievance that calls aloud for relief as regards drivers and conductors as well as the public has its foundation in the system adopted by the London General Omnibus Company and 'bus proprietors generally, of recognising as stations for their vehicles well-known and conspicuous public-houses. Now, as every one who

possesses any knowledge must be aware, taverns that are known as 'bus' or 'cab' houses are not as a rule remarkable for exterior tranquillity and decorum. As a rule such establishments boast of a 'roaring' trade; and where there is perpetual bustle and stir consequent on the constant arrival and departure of public conveyances from the very threshold of the place where the parting glass is on tap, it cannot well be otherwise.

Satisfactory as a roaring trade may be to the licensed victualler, it cannot be denied that it possesses features that no prudent man would willingly set before the eyes of his wife and children. Where there is an abundant flow of gin and beer there will constantly be found the 'loafer,' the dissolute, dirty public-house hanger-on and sponge, the business of whose existence it is to lay wait for the unwary, and those weak persons who hold to the opinion that liquor is never so good as when sniffed by the nose of mutual good-fellowship. At most favourable seasons the tavern loafer is not an agreeable creature to contemplate; but when he is drunk (and to the glorious attainment of which he applies himself with an amount of industry that, properly directed, would secure him at least thirty shillings a week) he exhibits himself as nothing more nor less than hideous. With his filthy short pipe askew in his scrubby mouth he lolls his greasy idle shoulders against the door-post, and indulges in such foul-mouthed blasphemy and blackguardism with his fellows that one had better be deaf almost than come within ear-shot of it.

Leave the objectionable person out of the picture, and still it remains altogether unfit for a decent woman's contemplation. I say woman, because it will

generally be found that these omnibus stations are resorted to chiefly by the gentler sex. They have shopping or other affairs to attend to, they start from their residence, make for the 'bus station, with the economical and laudable object of getting as long a ride as possible for their money. It very often happens that they take their little children with them, and this is an additional reason why they should make direct for a 'bus station rather than take their chance of finding accommodation in a passing vehicle hailed from the pavement. No doubt the station is a great convenience, but one much too dearly purchased under existing circumstances. It is altogether too bad to insist that the penalty attaching to the accommodation shall be the contemplation, though but for a few minutes, of a gin palace with its trade at full blast. Not a pretty sight for young children and innocent girls is that constant swaying to and fro of the 'palace' doors and the streaming in and out of customers—those who have drunk, and who, bleary-eyed and hiccuppy, leisurely emerge from the portals and mix with the street throng; and those who thirst for drink and, with eager elbows, make their way in to take the place of the satisfied. To be sure, it is not all rags, tatters, and hoggish drunkenness that meets the eye at the highway 'bus house. There is the highly respectable imbibor of grog 'nips' and glasses of bitter beer, and there is the hard-fisted grimy son of toil, who licks his lips in anticipation of a glorious swig at a full porter pot; there is the decently-attired mechanic's wife who filches from her husband's hard earnings that she may for the time assuage her hungry craving for a glass of gin; and there is the splendid female cursed with the means of adorn-

ing her unworthy person in silks and bows and feathers of the latest fashion. And presently the uneasy watcher from the windows of the waiting omnibus sees emerging from this same public-house, fresh from his latest potation, the driver, who forthwith is to climb to his lofty seat and to take the responsible reins of office, and the conductor, on whom is supposed to depend the comfort and safety of a 'bus full of passengers.

Not that one for a moment would be disposed to deny the right of both conductor and driver to a seat by the tap-room fire and a glass of something comforting during those brief minutes when the scandalously overworked poor fellows are off duty. It is the best accommodation that offers, and they are not in the least to blame for availing themselves of it; and if it should occasionally happen that the seductive atmosphere of the place tempts them to outrage the patience of the timekeeper, with his whistle, it is no great wonder. I don't happen to know if the worthy body of teetotallers reckon among their adherents any omnibus servants; if so I cannot conceive a more powerful and convincing illustration of the sustaining powers of anti-alcoholic drinks than the production at some crowded meeting of a teetotal 'bus driver, hale and hearty, and with the current of his good humour rippling and uncongealed after the completion of his eighth and last journey in the ear-nipping month of February.

Granting that the 'bus driver and his mate cannot well exist without brief spells of fireside comfort and alcoholic stimulant, it by no means follows that they must of necessity resort to the 'Bricklayers' Arms' or the 'Pig and Whistle' for them. What are wanted are 'waiting-rooms' on some

such principle as those established at railway stations. There might be three rooms—one for ladies, a second for gentlemen, and a third for the use of the omnibus servants. There might even be a refreshment-bar attached to the place; in fact, the improved system could scarcely be expected to find favour with the individuals last-mentioned, unless some such provision were made. But supposing this feature to be introduced and conducted after the railway refreshment-room model, it need not be in the least offensive.

Another of the eccentricities that adorn the existing system of omnibus conveyance, is a universal disposition on the part of the proprietors of the vehicle in question to set their faces against the sum of fivepence as an equitable and convenient sum to be charged a passenger as a fare. From some mysterious cause or another the figure of '5' was never yet known to appear on that tariff of prices that the law insists shall be conspicuously displayed within the vehicle. There may be seen sixpenny, fourpenny, threepenny, twopenny, and even penny quotations, but fivepence is avoided with a persistence that smacks almost of superstition, especially as it is an inconsistency (to use a mild phrase) openly exposed and made apparent to the travelling public every day and all the year through. There is no concealment about the bare-faced fact; it stares the passenger impudently in the face, and challenges him to dispute it. As, for example, from Holloway to the Great Northern Railway Station the fare is twopence, from the said station to Piccadilly Circus is a threepenny ride, but the fare exacted from the passenger who rides from Holloway to Piccadilly Circus is *sixpence*. To be sure, the passenger has the remedy in his own hands. He is at liberty to

alight at the termination of his twopenny ride, and then when the vehicle has started he may hail it again and commence a new hiring. This being done, the company will cheerfully allow him a discount of fifteen per cent. on his full passage money, which he would not be entitled to if he had kept his seat and saved all this extra trouble to driver and horses. It is only to the male passengers, however, that this defensive course is fairly open. A female would naturally shrink from so active a demonstration of the principles of justice; and it is not unlikely that she would be further deterred by the possibility of uncivil behaviour on the part of the conductor. Nor is it at all reasonable or proper that any individual, male or female, should be driven to the alternative of doing public battle for what is manifestly a right, or silently to endure the wrong. What is there odd or awkward about fivepence? A penny change out of sixpence settles the difficulty; or it may be compassed by the not very subtle process of adding a penny to a fourpenny-piece. Indeed one may go as far as to assume that in these educational times the majority of persons possessed of the sum of fivepence in so many separate coins would be equal to the arithmetical feat of reckoning them together.

Yet one more grievance,—the lack of sufficient sitting space in an omnibus. To be sure, the number of riders the interior of each vehicle may legitimately carry is plainly specified in black and white, and the conductor dare not cram in one more under a severe penalty; but what one feels curious to know is, who is the great official empowered to declare the space necessary and convenient for seating six persons? 'Licensed to carry twelve inside' is gravely notified within the omnibus; was

it ever the reader's misfortune to hail the vehicle and find himself the unlucky twelfth? It is a joke of old standing, I am aware, that squeezing of the wretched last-comer between two fat men, until he pants for breath, and his eyes are fit to start out of his head. The worst of it is that it is not a 'passing' joke. It isn't a joke at all; it is nothing better than one of those social abominations that in bygone times we somehow put up with, and which has escaped reform and remains for us to grin at and bear, like foolish people as we are. Not only is the omnibus of the present day a highly inconvenient carriage, it is positively indecent. It is all very well for Mr. Inspector—whoever he may be—to insist that a certain vehicle can and shall carry twelve adult persons; but what is the result? Should a seat be vacant at the further end of the omnibus, and a lady wish to occupy it, it is absolutely impossible for her to proceed to do so as a lady should. The door opens, and there is revealed to her a very very narrow lane, edged on either side with male and female knees, through which, having compressed her clothes about her as closely as possible, she must sidle until she reaches the desired spot. The conductor does not help her. As his practice shows, the gentleman whose stand is the monkey-board defines the word 'conductor' to mean simply a man who sees that no one rides without paying. The comfort of his passengers is no affair of his. It is no affair of his that the lady finds herself in painful difficulties before she has advanced three steps in the lane of knees; he stamps, or whistles, or tingles at his bell—aware perhaps that the sudden jerking forward of the vehicle will propel the lady toward her seat more

expeditiously than by any other means. His ear is deaf to the confused voices of remonstrance that issue from his torture 'bus; he only grins, and mutters to himself, 'They'll shake down all right into their places in a minnit!' and his victims relapse into silence, and the omnibus proceeds on its way. Apropos of the omnibus conductor's ideas of the limited nature of his duties, what warrant has he, I wonder, for the practice he has of late adopted in insisting on his lady and gentleman riders performing for him the work of fare-collecting? Time was when the conductor was content to wait till the journey's end for his due; now he will have it beforehand. 'Fares, please!' he hawls, not advancing a step beyond the doorway, and coolly waits while No. 6 on the right-hand side hands her shilling to No. 4 on the left-hand, and who in turn hands it to No. 2 on the right-hand, and so it reaches the gentleman with the money-pouch, who returns, say, eightpence change, that travels by the same route a return voyage to the owner. And this would be simple enough, only when, as it very frequently happens, while No. 4 on the left is obliging No. 6 on the right, No. 5 on the right is performing a similar favour for No. 3 on the left, and No. 6 on the left by mistake has the change that should have been handed to No. 2, in the semi-darkness of an ill-lit omnibus at night-time some slight confusion is not unlikely to arise.

There are some other omnibus grievances it was my intention to ventilate; but it has suddenly occurred to me if I make out, all at once, too strong a case Mr. Bruce may be roused to set about a remedy! Then I think of a certain Shakesperian line, beginning 'Better to bear,' &c., &c., &c., and say no more. J. G.



"TOO BAD."

TOO bad to gift my idle phrase
 With such a black intent,
 And malice see where none there was:
 You knew, sir, what I meant.
 'Tis always so: if comment pass
 Our lips on our own kind,
 Some after-thought of jealousy
 Men never fail to find.

Too bad it is: you wrong our sex;
 We can be generous too.
 You carp at woman's friendship, sir;
 Is it alone with you
 That common charity exists,
 Or friendship's to be had?
 You wrong our sex, in truth you do,
 Upon my word, too bad!

A WORD ON HOTELS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

THAT the most beautiful landscape in the world is improved by a good hotel in the foreground, is a Johnsonian axiom which no traveller will be disposed to dispute. At the same time, I think he will be disposed to add that there is no hotel in existence which might not be, more or less, improved, if the wishes and wants of the errant public were things as much considered as are the balance-books of loss and profit.

It has often occurred to me, in wonder, why the theme of hotel-advantages and hotel-drawbacks has never been more often dwelt upon in print, considering how exceedingly the comfort of the world lies in these convenient caravanserais, and will lie in them more and more, year by year, as the custom and the enjoyment of travel and change are brought within a continually - widening circle. There is no doubt that every tendency of modern life leads, and will lead more and more with increased facilities of movement and communication, towards an increased usage of hotels as dwelling - places; temporary dwelling - places certainly, and possibly even as permanent ones. Hotels are in an annually-increasing demand; whether they will answer the demand with proportionate spirit, and with forbearance from usuries trading upon it, is a problem which intimately concerns the future of the public. It will be in their own hands to compel an answer in the affirmative; for they are, or may be if they have energy enough, the masters of the situation. But at present the public appears so utterly lymphatic on the matter, and

takes so blindly and passively the very questionable goods that the 'limited liability' gods accord to them, that it seems very doubtful if they will ever rouse themselves to the determination requisite to get, by their insistence, their money's worth.

'Moi qui vous parle,' I have had some considerable experience in hotels. I have lived in many, and can judge them on the average with sufficient accuracy to justify me in penning a few phrases on the subject. I will not write here of hotels upon the continent, for it is very certain that those who conduct them never read English magazines; and, besides, they are for the main free from those defects of which I would treat here, though they are guilty perhaps of a larger share of them than is popularly supposed. It is hotels in England of which I would speak; for as the American mode of employing them as permanent houses gains ground in this country they assume an importance higher than they held whilst it was only the occasional convenience of the peripatetic classes which was involved in their shortcomings. No one would deny that the 'grand hotels' on the basis of public companies, which late years have seen begotten in the united kingdoms, are a very vast improvement upon the miserable inns which before their advent did duty everywhere. Their method of tariffs, of uniform and plainly stated charges, of lofty rooms and airy corridors, of reading-rooms and salles à manger, and also the rest of their system, are an unmitigated boon when compared with the old mode of inn-keeping as practised in Great

Britain. They tend to simplify the art of living, and to embellish it; and they have one inestimable advantage, that any visitor to them by looking at their scale of prices, can adjust his orders to the scale of his riches; and may, if he will take the trouble, know beforehand almost to a fraction what his account will turn out to be at the end of the week. These are great benefits not to be undervalued lightly when we contrast them with the low close rooms, the hard horsehair beds of torture denominated in grim irony easy-chairs, the perpetual smile of 'stiffness' as ladies term it, the execrable cooking, and the mile-long bill which were the characteristics of the English hotel before the advent of the Brobdignagian houses, and which are still to be found broadcast, in all their savage hideousness, all over the country, by any one rash enough in an evil hour to propose to himself a home-tour in lieu of his usual villeggiatura in the Engadine or the Forêt Noir. No. The big hotels are a revolutionary and sanitary movement, and are not to be dealt with except with a grateful remembrance of all the evils from which they have done much to deliver us. It is in no ingrate spirit to them that I lament the blemishes which mar their liberties, and would fain urge on the public, by which they exist, to bring the public will to bear on these faults and failures until they shall cease from off the face of the earth. Perfection, we know, will no more exist in caravanserais than in cabinets; but in the one as in the other a claim to monopoly is only justified by a very strong proof of superiority.

Now, first of all defects in the great hotels their service is the grossest. Their charge—seldom less than two shillings a-head—is

very high; but no one would grumble were the service good. It is hardly too much to say that, on the contrary, it is, in almost all of them, execrable. It is rarely that in any one of them is a bell answered under ten minutes of time, or several tugs at the handle; and there is at no time anything of that silent attention to half-uttered wishes, that remembrance of expressed preference, or that leading to forestall commands which is the essence of a good servant's willing obedience. On the contrary, the domestics, male and female, hang down what they bring, grumble sulkily if reproved, and, where in themselves well-trained, are so raced off their legs by overwork that they bring no sort of comfort to the visitor. 'We are so busy, sir,' is the common (and often true) plea for all defaults and delays of attendance. The visitor is tempted to concur. 'Mais diable qu'est ce que cela me fait?' The fact is that, to make money, too few servants are kept in these great houses, and the deficiency in numbers of the working staff is made much the worse by a practice, too general, of hiring as waiters Germans and Swiss who have never been in situations previously; sons of inn-keepers, or pastrycooks, who want to learn at one stroke their future business and a foreign tongue, and who in consideration of this require no wages, but even—in some cases—pay to be hired. These neophytes receive their education at the expense of the hapless visitor to whose room they may be attached, and whose sufferings are the grindstone on which their rawness and their roughness are rubbed away. Thus, as a rule, the visitor pays his two shillings a-day for service that he may be practised upon by the interesting ignoramus,

Fritz or Louis. It is an office philanthropic no doubt, but scarcely enjoyable, as Fritz and Louis in the early stage of their career have boots as thick as their own skulls, smell atrociously of beer, mutter guttural patois, and have about as much knowledge of waiting upon you as a mountain-bear from the Pyrenees.

It is, however, only the visitor who suffers; the hotel knows that be the attendance good or bad, it will equally pocket the two shillings a-day. So bad is it almost invariably, that these hotels are unendurable unless you have your own body servant. If you have him or her—according as you be master or mistress—it is better; but here again another evil arises in the high charge for what is to most persons a necessity, i.e., a servant of their own. Seven shillings a-day for your man's or maid's board and lodgement is no inconsiderable addition to your expenses, whilst you are never charged the less for the hotel attendance though your own servant wait on you entirely. Added to this, the charge and the board is the same for all classes of visitors' servants—from a little groom of fifteen to a superb courier of fifty: and in the case of many servants the luxurious diet of the hotel renders them utterly discontented with any ordinary fare at home; they have so many hot dishes at breakfast and supper, and so many courses at dinner, that they are put out of sorts for any servants' hall under that of a ducal establishment. It is very desirable that the fare for the servants should be simpler, and the charges to their masters lower.

Again, nothing can be more ridiculous than the plain breakfast, as it is termed. Plain it is indeed, heaven knows! If three

people sit down to breakfast they pay six shillings, for a pot of tea, a pat of butter, a little loaf, and a few discs of leather yecept 'toast' or 'muffin.' For any other necessity of the breakfast-table, for any tongue of flavour comprised in bacon, ham, or their congeners, the unhappy trio must pay extra, and pay very heavily too.

Now I am fully aware of the very large losses in hotels from waste, and the continual expenses in various ways which have to be made up as best they may by charges in force upon all matters. But surely a couple of shillings a head, for what costs about three-pence-halfpenny, may without exaggeration be found *un peu trop fait*. We will pay our two shillings manfully; but in pity's sake let them give us for it some proper breakfast fare. Apropos of breakfast, there is another matter kindred to it which is a sad grievance for the fairer section of hotel visitors. It is this: that though afternoon tea is an institution already mellowed by a dozen years of age, and every year becoming more popular and indispensable, hotels blandly persist in ignoring the very existence of this pleasant social rite. If a charming woman finds herself with half-a-dozen friends lounging about her in her drawing-room in an hotel, at five o'clock in the London Season, she naturally rings for tea. The waiter gazes at her with stolid eyes: 'A meat tea, Madam?' he asks; this abomination being the only meal he can think of as appropriate to that hour of the waning day. When she repudiates this horrible suggestion, he will roll lack-lustre eyes around the room. 'For how many, madam?' And she has thereon to count her guests per head; a proceeding which she naturally feels takes from all the

grace of her offered repast, and suggests to her callers unpleasantly the additions they will make to her hotel-bill. This difficulty over, the tea appears; the leather discs of the morning's breakfast being heated up for the occasion, and no cream, probably, being obtainable, because all that is in the house is being whipped up for the table-d'hôte dinner. She sighs for the eggshell china, the fragrant souchong, the dainty little cakes of her home banquet; and sadly feels that all social charm is taken from what, properly managed, is the pleasantest social hour of the whole day.

Now, let it be well understood that in these lamentations I am not falling foul of the prices charged. I am well acquainted with the enormous expense of all the working departments of an hotel, which must be met by charges which will always look too high to the unthinking public. The habitual rule to charge exactly double the cost of everything (i. e., such as one pheasant or one partridge, which is always charged at the rate of a brace), will always seem to the public extravagant, since the public does not take into account the vast expenses for *cuisine*, taxation, rental, management, machinery, &c., &c., for all of which that public is charged nothing. It is not the prices (save that, indeed, for private servants, which is absurd) in which I would desire reform. It is in that which they give us in return for our money; and it is just this which it will lie with the public to obtain by their resolve, or to lose by their apathy.

For instance, let madame, of whom I spoke a moment ago, pay for her five o'clock tea what the hotels need charge; but let her, in the name of all social enjoyment, get for her money just such an

elegant little tea equipage, just such pretty bonbons and gateaux, just such odorous orange pekoe, and such fresh cream, as she would offer to her friends at home.

I am convinced that, were hotels to study more carefully the tastes of their *clientelles*, there would not be so many bankruptcies amongst them. They would become much more popular amongst the higher classes, who now shudder at the name of these large hosteleries, because it is only a synonym to them for bad service, bare apartments, and continual irritation at missing everything to which they are accustomed—unhappily, amongst these their letters and their friends' visits too often included. For, carelessness in the due delivery of cards and correspondence, and an obstinate indifference as to what ladies' woe or social trouble a 'not at home' in the wrong place may entail, are two evils that will, I fear, be long inseparable from our reminiscences of hotel sojourning.

Yet, when all is said, the drawbacks to our modern caravansaries seem so remediable, if the errant public would only bring steadily their will to bear on them, that I will fain hope these few suggestions may not be thrown out in vain. As society is now constituted, it is certain that hotels will be more and more required; nor can I see any reason why they should not be more used as places of residence, if they would only adapt themselves with greater pliability to the requirements of social life, and give to their rooms more grace of arrangement and more of the aspect and feeling of home. This would be easily done, and would be of small cost, in comparison with the great attraction, and consequently profit, which it would most certainly create.

To small families, to childless people, to men and women who do not want the service of an establishment, to all those who require to pass the London Season amongst their world, but who are not rich enough to take a mansion in Belgravia, or are not inclined for the burden of a household—the system of hotels would offer immeasurable advantages; and chief amongst these would rank the certainty of their rate of expenditure—a certainty that never can be arrived at in a private house.

The greatest difficulty that there is to contend with, in endeavouring to render hotels agreeable for residence of long duration, is the strong preference of hotel boards and directors for the *va et vient* class of supporters. People who are here to-day and gone to-morrow are not fastidious; the traveller who alights for a week is not particular as to service and equipment; and the bird on the wing, who may never return, does not take the trouble to scold the chance leaf that covers his momentary rest. So the bird on the wing

is their favourite; and they do not take the trouble to conciliate the more elegant birds who would remain if the nest were to their taste. This preference of hotel-managers is, no doubt, the greatest stumbling-block in the way of the changes I advocate; and it is a very heavy one. Yet I do not think it insuperable; and if one could but awaken the *va et vient* to a sense that though their sojourn may only last a day, the day may just as well be as pleasant an one as possible, this obstacle would be removed; and with it all objections to what is, even with its present shortcomings, a welcome and beneficial system. Let the public only take the matter cordially in hand, and let it only, whilst extending its payments generously with one hand, hold fast with the other to what are its due rights in return, and hotels will very quickly assimilate themselves to the just demands of society; since of them, yet more surely than of any institution, it must be said that they must live to please, and that they must please to live.



CROSSED IN LOVE.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.—CHAPTER I.



MY Aunt Nancy was crossed in love. I heard this fact from my earliest childhood, and pondered over it until I grew into womanhood. I have sat by the hour nursing my doll, and wondering what it was to be crossed in love. I had heard of being cross-gartered, cross-grained, cross-examined, and I had been myself cross-questioned, until I scarcely knew whether I spoke the truth or not; but to be crossed in love passed my understanding. Should I ever be crossed in love? and if so must I appear like Aunt Nancy? I shuddered at the idea. She was my father's sister, and he always told me that she had been a great

beauty and the toast of the county, but that she had been crossed in love, and I must ask no questions. As I had a proper filial fear of my father, and had neither mother, brother, nor sister, I was compelled to hold my tongue and wonder on.

I fervently prayed that I might never be either crossed in love, or the toast of the county. 'A great beauty' the maids said I was, and I had no objection to this.

In Aunt Nancy the toast of the county—and I could never help thinking of buttered toast; a luxury I was sometimes permitted—the toast of the county appeared in Aunt Nancy, in the guise of a tall, gaunt woman, with sharp,

marked features, piercing black eyes, sallow complexion, and very bad temper. The toast of the county was dressed in a costume peculiar to herself. She wore what had been called in her young days a green Joseph—a name which set my wits to work, as did everything connected with Aunt Nancy. This Joseph was a riding habit, yellow-buttoned, and thirty years old at least. Whether the head-dress was a continuation of the Joseph I could never determine. It consisted of a fillet of black crêpe, bound round the head so as effectually to conceal the hair, and losing itself in the Joseph behind.

Aunt Nancy lived in the village of which my father was rector. She was reputed rich; she was unquestionably parsimonious. Her one maid-servant used to make sad complaints to me of the poor and insufficient food provided for parlour and kitchen. Aunt Nancy's peculiarities caused respectable servants to leave her; so she had to put up with the young and rough.

I once asked this melancholy maid-of-all-work if she could tell me what it was to be crossed in love, assuring her that Aunt Nancy had been thus crossed. She had a ready explanation, which she gave me in the broad dialect of our native county.

'Why, miss,' she said, 'it be boxes in the year, and bother from morning to night; keeping at home o' Zundays, and scolding Mondays, Tuesdays Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays. It be low wages and no holidays. It be old clothes a-patched till you don't know what the vust 'terial war; musty bandboxes, vull o' muslins an' laces a hunderd year old; rickaty vurniture, an' a clock as won't go, put 'im as you will. Darn that clock! I do wine' un, an' wine' un, an' he be just like missus

hurzelf, the more you do try, the more cantankerous he be. An' hur do zay I do keep un back'ards a purpose, when he's too old an' creaky an' wheezy to go on, he be.'

I condoled with Becky upon her unfortunate state, but was none the nearer to the solution of the mystery. I sometimes fancied it lay hidden in a secret chamber of Aunt Nancy's house, which had never been opened within the memory of any of my contemporaries, and of which the blind-covered windows were alone visible to the curious. I felt sure it was haunted by the ghost of that love-crosser I was always dreaming about, and never passed its cobwebbed door without a shudder.

My cousin Rob and I had many discussions and quarrels about Aunt Nancy. As she declined seeing that son and heir of the family honours and somewhat dilapidated property when he occasionally came to pay my father and me a visit, he was both jealous and angry. I, on my part, was fond of Aunt Nancy, and when Cousin Rob abused her I took up her defence, and excused her peculiarities by explaining that she was crossed in love. I entreated him to discover what that was. As he was fresh from school, his explanations were lucid and classical in the extreme.

'Why, it's bosh, Minnie,' he would say. 'Nobody falls in love now, much less is crossed. A fellow might see a pretty girl like you, now, and play with her, and walk with her, as I do with you; but as for falling in love, he ain't such a muff.'

'But Aunt Nancy is clever, and quite like a man,' I argued.

'She's a muff, all the same. I wonder whether she'll leave you her money, since she's so awfully fond of you. Let me dress up in

your clothes and go and see her. She won't admit any man, you see.'

Rob drew himself up, and I looked admiringly at him. I loved Rob with all my heart, and considered him a hero, albeit not of the heroic ages.

Rob put his threat into execution, and introduced himself to Aunt Nancy in female attire. He did not confide in me, but I knew it when too late.

Our rectory was a charming old place, a little out of the village. It was embowered in trees and shrubberies, had a bright lawn, a brighter garden, and a tiny pond, surrounded by weeping willows and evergreens. Besides the principal gate that opened into the village road, there was a back gate that led into the glebe, and thence into fields and fields that seemed as endless as the meads and gardens of Paradise. Here my father, dearest and most angelic of men, lived, wrote, prayed, and talked to me, and taught me when he could spare the time. Hence he went to his church and parish, passing my mother's grave every day, and pausing to breathe a sigh or drop a tear over that green holm of her he had loved best on earth. Here I was born and nurtured, and grew up as wild as a hedge-rose. Here I gardened, fished, climbed trees, and wandered about from morning till night, leading a life as fresh and innocent as country life could be. My friends and companions were the villagers and their children, my pleasures as constant and changing as the seasons. Cousin Rob called me an old-fashioned, unconventional mousey, and played me many a trick by way of introducing me into the ways of the world, as he expressed it.

But the worst trick he ever played was the forcing himself

into Aunt Nancy's august presence, dressed in as many of my clothes as he could get on.

My father and I were sitting one evening waiting tea for Rob. We were growing impatient, for it was waxing late, and my father liked his tea punctually at eight o'clock. Suddenly we were aroused from our cogitations over Rob's absence, by the sudden appearance of Becky, who entered unceremoniously through the drawing-room window, which opened to the ground, and exclaimed:

'Please sir, please miss, missus wants you instanter. She be in a towering passion, and I don't know no more why than the man in the moon.'

'Do go, Minnie,' said my father, who, like men in general, disliked women in towering passions.

'You must come, please sir, missus zed zo.'

'Do, papa, I am afraid,' I entreated. 'Perhaps aunt has been crossed in loved again.'

My father laughed, took up his hat, and we all went to Aunt Nancy's, Becky pouring forth what further she had to tell as we walked up the village.

'I was out for water, please zur, I warn't gossiping indeed, miss, if you'll tell missus. When I come in I heerd missus scolding to hursel in the parlour; and then she com into the passage, and hollered out, "Becky, you idle slut! go for the rector and Miss Minnie, and tell them to come here 'rectly minute." Then she locked the parlour door, and stamped her voot at me, so I come here in a twinkling.'

'You must be patient, Becky,' said my father. 'If you do your duty with single eye and purpose, you will be rewarded. My sister has her troubles.' —

'Lor' bless your reverence! so have I. But if you was only to

try it for a week now! I haan't got no peace, morning, noon, nor night. Vust thing in the morning ring, ring, ring; and if I bean't out o' bed quick as a vlea, in comes missus hurzelf; last thing at night, if I bean't in bed quicker than a vlea, in she comes again.'

'I dare say you sleep well, Becky,' said my father.

'Lor! iz zur, from the time missus do go out till she do come in again,' said Becky.

'Then you have much to be thankful for,' said my father, with his quiet smile. 'Do you know there are many great ladies who would change estate with you for the sake of such sleep as you describe.'

'And missus night and morning?' asked Becky, incredulously.

'Possibly,' answered my father, himself doubtful of his position.

When we reached Redbreast Cottage, my aunt's abode, we found her anxiously awaiting us in her little hall.

'There, brother! There, Miss Minnie! Enter at once!' was her greeting, as she pointed to her parlour door.

'What's the matter, sister? You look ruffled,' said my father, demurely.

'Matter! Ruffled! Go in and see,' gasped Aunt Nancy, unlocking the parlour door, and throwing it open. 'What are you glowering at, you idle slut?' she added to Becky, who thereupon hurried into the kitchen.

My father and I went into the parlour, where we found a woman. She was seated at the table, bending over a sheet of paper, apparently writing. I saw with dismay my best jacket, and guessed at once the cause of the disturbance. I knew it must be Rob. I recognized the parlour-maid's Sunday bonnet and the cook's gown, and no longer wondered at Aunt

Nancy's disturbed mind and manner.

'It is Rob, father,' I whispered, while Aunt Nancy was exorcising Becky.

'Rob!' cried my father.

'Yes, uncle,' said Rob, looking up and trying to assume his grandest manner. 'Your disinherited nephew has thus disguised himself in order to see his maternal aunt, whose unjust contempt for our sex masculine has hitherto excluded from her presence. *Veni, vidi, vici!*'

'*Vici!*' screamed Aunt Nancy from the passage.

'Rob,' said my father, 'this is too bad,' and he burst into a genuine laugh, in which I joined.

Who could have helped it? Rob, with a flaxen front of short curls, a brown chignon, a light fabric called a bonnet, and a pair of spectacles, was irresistible.

'You laugh!' cried Aunt Nancy, as she entered.

My father nearly choked himself in his effort to suppress the offensive cachinnation.

'Pardon, most sublime aunt,' began Rob, encouraged by my father's merriment.

But a severe frown on that brow soon checked his heroics. We all feared my father, while we loved him.

'Sister, I am sorry that this silly boy should have vexed you,' said my father.

'Sir, he forced himself into my presence. He took me in,' said Aunt Nancy.

'That is more than you did me, aunt,' said the incorrigible Rob.

'Silence, fool!' said my aunt. 'Minnie, I accuse you of collusion. I renounce you for ever!'

I did not know what collusion meant, and wondered whether it meant being crossed in love.

'Had you anything to do with

this tomfoolery, child?' said my father, severely.

'No, indeed, papa. Rob knows,' I replied.

Rob declared that I was innocent, and my father believed us. Not so Aunt Nancy. She knew my jacket.

'Henceforth I wash my hands of my niece,' she said.

'But not of your nephew, aunt,' cried Rob, suddenly slipping off his head-gear, and appearing a

comely, unblushing youth. He was said to be like his mother, Aunt Nancy's dead sister, and she started as she met the frank, good-humoured black eyes. For a moment she seemed moved, then she waved her hand majestically as if to dismiss him. I see her now, as she stood towering over us, her eyes flashing and the crêpe turban waving. She suddenly caught sight of something on the floor.

'What is this?' she exclaimed,



hurrying towards a prostrate band-box, out of which protruded rags of every kind and colour—silks, satins, calicoes, muslins, pieces of all the garments that Aunt Nancy had worn from her childhood upwards, and with which she was wont to patch her shoes, pocket-handkerchiefs, and the like.

'How dare you, sir? Ungentlemanlike baboon!' shrieked Aunt

Nancy, and therewith swooped down upon her nephew and gave him a box in the ear that might have cracked its tympanum.

'Unladylike she-ape, rather,' said Rob, putting himself into a warlike attitude and facing his injured relative.

The blow had roused the blood of giver and receiver, and the flush on Aunt Nancy's face gave me to

perceive, for the first time, how handsome she must have been, and that Rob was like her.

— 'Come away, sir,' said my father, sternly, putting his hand on Rob's shoulder and grasping my unlucky jacket.

'Don't be angry, aunt,' I interceded, reverently touching the green Joseph.

But her blood was roused, and she shook me off.

'Enough of this,' said my father, calmly. 'It is only a schoolboy trick, deserving the box in the ear you have administered. Rob will know better some day.'

'When he has been crossed in love,' said Rob, casting an angry glance at Aunt Nancy.

Another blow was impending, but my father pointed to the door and Rob walked out, dragging his calico skirt after him. I saw a smile on my dear father's face, but it faded before Aunt Nancy's frown.

'Look here,' she said, pointing to a piece of paper on which Rob had been writing during his imprisonment. I caught the first lines of an elegant poem, which were as follows:

'My dear aunt Nancy,
I well can fancy,
How young De Squancy,
Your charms adored—'

the remainder was lost to me, as my father crumpled the paper up and put it in his pocket.

I followed Rob, and found Becky helping him to undress. He was in a great passion, she was con-
doling.

'Hide the clothes, Becky,' I said, 'and I will send for them. Come along, Rob.'

'I must put 'em in the chimbley, or missus is zure to vind 'em,' muttered Becky. 'Lor! what a row I shall have. He, he, he! He took her in, zure enough.'

The hatless Rob hurried out of

the house, and I followed. The parlour window was thrown open, and out came the bonnet, chignon, and front, left behind in the fray. I stooped to pick them up and carried these trophies after the retreating hero. I do not think Aunt Nancy saw him, or his other honours would not have remained long behind.

'How could you, Rob?' I exclaimed, as soon as I overtook the breathless invader.

But Rob was not penitent. He launched into a sea of epithets that would have drowned a more accustomed hearer than I, and that quite overwhelmed even me. I had been accustomed to consider Aunt Nancy as a grand but victimised woman. Rob reduced her below the level of her sex. I remonstrated in vain. It was some time before I could induce him to tell me that he had borrowed the chignon from our housemaid, who, it appeared, sometimes wore it when my father and I were at church, or at a reliable distance from home, and that she had been in his secret, and had helped him to dress. The bonnet was also hers. I held it before Rob's eyes, a rumpled specimen of limp tulle and crushed flowers. This also I had never seen before, for my father forbade what he called those 'offensive top-knots,' and in his presence, at least, the servants appeared in sober head-gear, caps with strings and bonnets with crowns.

'You must give her a new one, Rob,' I said. 'You have been very wrong, and are not sorry.'

'I've seen the old beldame, at least,' said Rob, recovering his temper; 'but I wish I had frightened her to death. She knew me directly, and went out and——'

'Locked you in like a naughty boy,' said I.

To Rob's disgust my father

treated his escapade as a silly trick, and him as a foolish school-boy. Rob was preparing himself for a lecture, and talking largely of what the governor would say, when my father came home, and in a slightly contemptuous tone said,

'I thought you were growing into manhood, preparing for the army. A man and a soldier condescending to bully a silly woman. Poor Rob!'

And so, apparently, ended Rob's attempt to see Aunt Nancy. But the consequences fell upon me. He soon went back to his military college; I remained behind to suffer for his fault.

For a long time Aunt Nancy would see no one, not even my father. Becky bewailed her fate more broadly than ever, and I lamented with her. As I was really fond of Aunt Nancy, and as my pleasures and acquaintances were few, I grieved sincerely at being thus sent to Coventry. In course of time, however, Fate reunited us, or rather curiosity, which may be female fate.

In my father's parish was an old mansion belonging to General Sir George Hamilton. He had been all his life in India, and, consequently, Hatherton Hall had been untenanted, save by two old servants who took care of it. This place was suddenly announced as let. Masons and carpenters were at work, and the whole village was astir. Nothing like it had happened in my memory.

One day I was passing Aunt Nancy's window, and eagerly looking in, when, to my great delight, she appeared at it and beckoned to me.

In my joy I nearly kissed Becky, and fairly jumped on Aunt Nancy's neck, exclaiming, 'It was not my fault, and indeed, indeed Rob——'

'No more, no more,' said Aunt

Nancy, disengaging herself and hastily rubbing her hand across her eyes. 'I want to hear about the Hall, Minnie, nothing else I assure you.'

I was able to tell her that a rich London merchant had taken the Hall for a term of years, that his name was Wallace, and that he had an only daughter. This was all I knew, and I remember that I indulged myself in various conjectures concerning our coming neighbours. My aunt, who was a stickler for the aristocracy, seemed to take no further interest in them when she heard they were, as she expressed it, 'of the tradeocracy.' I noticed a slight twitching of the face when I told her that Sir George Hamilton was reported ill, and I wondered, as I had often done before, whether he had anything to do with the crossing in love.

From this time I resumed my customary visits to Aunt Nancy, and as Rob did not again make his appearance, until as an officer, he came for his farewell visit previously to joining his regiment, which was going to India, no unusual tempest ruffled our mutual relations. Aunt Nancy was cross, caustic, churlish, parsimonious, and solitary as ever; but I thought of that early trouble and attributed it to her being crossed in love.

CHAPTER II.

In due course of time Mr. Wallace and his daughter Matilda Sophia arrived at the Hall. The keenest curiosity was impatiently suffered by all the village, but by none so impatiently as by me. When they appeared at church I am afraid they engrossed more general attention than did my dear father, until, from the pulpit, he gave us a well-understood reproof.

He considered, he said, wandering eyes quite as objectionable as itching ears. Had Mr. Wallace and his daughter understood their pastor as well as his other parishioners did they would have been flattered. After the service I had my reprimand, and I have never forgotten it.

'You found a new object of worship, my dear, to day. I hope the answer to your prayers may be as effectual to the saving of your soul as that promised by the Old.'

So said my father, with his quiet, half-satirical manner. I told him that I could not help it, although I was quite ashamed of myself, and asked him if he did not think the new comers remarkably elegant and handsome. He smiled, and said he had tried not to look much at them, but that he had seen some very smart colours in the great pew.

Aunt Nancy was much more satisfactory. She never went to church, but she had seen them pass her window as they returned.

'*Parvenus*, my dear,' she said.

'Oh, aunt! I am sure they are gentlefolks: so well-dressed and good-looking,' said I.

'Nothing to do with it. I saw old Betty make her bob to them as they passed, and the condescending smirk she got in return was quite enough. I say they have no business at the Hall;' and a flush and flash lighted up her marked face.

My father and I made their acquaintance the next day. My first impressions were wholly favourable. Mr. Wallace was a fine, gentlemanlike-looking man, with good manners; his daughter, a fashionable highly-educated girl of eighteen, who appeared to me the perfection of beauty and taste. I was only a year younger, but I knew that I was a mere child to

this young lady. She made herself very pleasant to me—hoped we should be friends—talked of subjects of which I knew nothing—slightly patronised me, as the Hall will sometimes patronise the Parsonage—and did her best to draw me out.

At first I perceived that Mr. Wallace's manner to my father was something like his daughter's to me; but it soon yielded beneath the simple ease of my father's rare good-breeding. Mr. and Miss Wallace made many inquiries concerning the neighbours, and seemed anxious for society. I remarked that they did not affect people who were not either rich or great, but passed over many of our particular friends among the clergy with an interjection, reserving their comments for the squires, baronets, and our one 'lord.' Miss Wallace asked me if I knew any of the officers quartered in our county town; and, upon my replying in the negative, appeared much surprised. When my father and I left the Hall, I became voluble enough; but, in return for my expressions of ardent admiration for our new acquaintances, I could only elicit from my father such phrases as 'Wait a bit, Minnie. We must see more of them. Very good-looking, certainly, but what did the young lady drag about after her? A train, was it? Oh! they managed those silly appendages better in the old times. Hers reached half across the room, and I was nearly walking over it more than once. Quite a gentleman! Oh! to be sure, and undoubtedly of grand presence. I wonder what Aunt Nancy would think of them?'

My father had a high opinion of Aunt Nancy's discrimination, although he grieved much over her absence from church and other peculiarities.

When I recounted my impres-

sions to her, and minutely described all I had seen and heard, she persisted in using that odious word *parvenus*, and I, in my superior judgment, began to perceive, that all old people ever think the new generation inferior to their own. I hinted as much; and Aunt Nancy laughed scornfully, saying, that gentlefolks were gentlefolks whatever their generation or position—and vulgar people were vulgar people whether rich or poor. However, the Wallaces were not vulgar—of that I was sure; and my father agreed with me.

They soon received visits from all the neighbours, far and near, and the usual number of dinner parties followed. My father accepted invitations to a few of them, but declined them for me, as he did not consider me old enough for general society, and did not wish me to acquire a taste for it. I was, nevertheless, a great deal at the Hall, and Miss Wallace and I became fast friends. She was good-natured; and, in return for my devotion and admiration, did her best to make me fashionable, and to root up, as she expressed it, my old-world notions. I was disappointed that I could not inspire her with my love for the country and the beauties of nature. 'A primrose by a river's brim,' was, as Wordsworth hath it, nothing but a primrose to her—and the river called up no sympathy from the depths of her soul. It was water and nothing more. Unlike my dear companion, Rob, she could not wander by the brookside and find music in its murmur—beauty in its banks. Still she was a musician and an artist, such as masters can make out of the material afforded by ambitious school-girls.

By degrees she took me into her confidence. A new light dawned upon the narrow horizon of my

experience. I became the recipient of love stories; of the adventures of what I heard called the age of 'fast' girls—and I felt myself, by comparison, very slow indeed. I found that Miss Wallace was able to correspond with more than one young man—several, indeed; while I found it difficult to write a proper letter, even to my cousin Rob. She had walked, talked, flirted with layman and clergyman, soldier and civilian; while I had never spoken half-a-dozen consecutive words to any man in my life, save my father, cousin Rob, and the country people. I admired her accordingly. She said she inclined to the military. There was a regiment quartered in the neighbouring town, and she knew most of the officers. She intended to induce her father to call on them and invite them to the Hall.

'Captain Harcourt is a perfect love!' she exclaimed, enthusiastically. 'I am sure you would like him; and you are just the girl to suit him.'

'Cousin Rob is in the army,' I said, in return. 'He is coming here before he goes to India. I hope you will like him, Matilda.'

Captain Harcourt and Cousin Rob did arrive in the course of time: one at the Hall, the other at the Rectory. I certainly *did* like Captain Harcourt; and apparently Miss Wallace liked Rob. I found the Captain the most accomplished and agreeable man I had ever seen; and felt that my cousin, the Lieutenant, could not compete with him in society, albeit he was so amusing in private life. Miss Wallace made herself very charming to both, as well as to various other gentlemen who came and went at the Hall. I was allowed, by degrees, to go and come when I liked. I owed this privilege to Aunt Nancy, who told my father

that I might as well make my apprenticeship to the follies of life early as late, and that she thought I was to be trusted.

I entered upon this apprenticeship very diffidently; and few girls of the nineteenth century have ever felt so much ashamed of themselves. I could do nothing but blush and make awkward curtsies, and say nothing but 'Yes' and 'No.' Cousin Rob, in all the plenitude of military ease, laughed at me, called me the shyest of country mice, and held up for my example and admiration Miss Wallace. All in vain. I shrunk deeper and deeper into my hole. My father watched over me vigilantly, and occasionally scolded Rob for rallying me.

'Let her alone, Rob,' I heard him once say. 'She is more to my taste than all your Miss Wallace's.'

'I only chaff her a little, sir,' said Rob.

'You only *what*?' said my father, who was strangely unacquainted with the slang of the period.

'Chaff her, sir. That means—why that means—' said Rob, puzzled for an explanation.

'I think I understand,' said my father, with a malicious twinkle in his eye. 'You call the conversation of this pleasing age, chaff. Assuredly there is not a grain of corn in it. An admirable expression, Minnie; our old friends, the poets, would not understand us.'

'They had some queer bits of old-fashioned slang, too, sir,' said Rob, boldly.

'But they were not chaff, nephew. They would not have reached us if they had been. The wind would have carried them into that out-of-the-way corner where chaos reigns. So, Minnie, be a sensible chicken and stick to the wheat.'

I followed my father's advice as

well as I could. I did my utmost to glean a little wisdom here and there, and got laughed at for my pains. While Rob devoted himself to Miss Wallace, Captain Harcourt took especial trouble in trying to draw me out. The more difficult the task, the more energetically he stuck to it. I was much obliged to him, for he was such a gentleman that he never made me feel awkward, and kindly covered my confusion when I said or did what I felt to be awkward. But I sadly missed my cousin's old confidence and attention. He had little time for me; he was so much engrossed by Miss Wallace, that he seemed only to have eyes and ears for her.

Aunt Nancy, who knew everything, twitted me with this.

'So, Minnie,' she said, 'that divine Rob has deserted you. But you needn't suppose Miss Wallace will have anything to say to him. A flashy-dashy girl like that would think scorn of a cub such as he.'

'Indeed, aunt, you mistake. She likes him extremely. She thinks him very handsome and pleasant. And so he is, Aunt Nancy. He is not a cub.'

'Charming youth! I beg you will have nothing to say to him, Minnie. Indeed you have no chance. I should give you up for ever if you set your heart upon him.'

'I shall always love Cousin Rob, aunt,' I said, boldly; 'and never, never desert him—even if—he—deserts me.'

'You remember what you asked me once, Minnie? Beware that you do not get a practical explanation.'

I remembered that my question had been, 'What is it to be crossed in love?'

But I was not in love with Rob—I was quite sure of that. He was not so charming as Captain

Harcourt; and then—I had known him all my life.

Still I narrowly watched his growing devotion to Miss Wallace, and was too proud to let him see that I perceived it. Miss Wallace gave him full encouragement—but then she encouraged all men alike, except, perhaps, Captain Harcourt.

'He is a very nice fellow,' she would say to me of Rob. 'Such a nice fellow!'

One day my father overheard the encomium.

'Is that Rob?' he said. 'I was not aware that he had obtained collegiate distinction. Rob a fellow? I am quite proud. Rob, how long have you been a fellow?'

Rob, unluckily, appeared on the scene at this moment.

'Ever since I was born, I suppose, uncle,' laughed Rob. 'Why do you ask?'

'These young ladies were making a Don of you; and I, knowing your tastes, was surprised.'

'Men no longer exist—we are all fellows now,' said Captain Harcourt, attracted by my father's manner. Every one was attracted by that manner, half sarcastic, half playful. 'The young ladies, even give us brevet rank, and shall we not take it?'

I saw that Miss Wallace coloured crimson, and I knew that my eyes were cast down.

'I like of all things to be called a "nice fellow" by a handsome girl,' said Rob, glancing at Matilda. 'It is so much more jolly than a "nice young man."'

Every one laughed; and my father turned the conversation; but he did not fail to tell me, privately, that whatever the style of the day might be, to call a man a 'nice fellow' was not good style for girls, and that he liked the old style best.

That 'merrie month of May' was a pleasant time to us young

people, and we were all very nearly losing our heads in our Maying. Poor Rob's was gone—mine was going. Of Captain Harcourt's and Miss Wallace's I was not sure. If I spoke of the Captain to Miss Wallace, her general reply was, 'He is very clever and agreeable, of course, but he is very poor. You know that my father will hear of nothing for me short of a title—and with my enormous fortune, I can claim one.'

I sighed for Rob.

Captain Harcourt, on his side, did not overstep the common bounds of society in his intercourse with Miss Wallace, but rather seemed attracted by me. I fancied she was jealous of the preference, but I was so flattered by the polished, thoughtful attention of this accomplished man of the world, that I could not sigh for her.

One day we found ourselves deep in the woodlands. Rob and Matilda in advance—Captain Harcourt and I sauntering behind. Beneath us a world of blue hyacinths sparkling like a sapphire sky—of wood anemones, peeping out like pale stars—of all the many-hued glories of the spring. Above us a chorus of birds singing to one another as birds alone can sing—clear, continuous joy-bringing carols for the resurrection of Nature after her winter death.

'We are ordered away next week, Miss Minnie,' said Captain Harcourt. 'I am glad of this unusual chance of finding myself alone with you.'

'My father and Mr. Wallace cannot walk so fast,' I said.

'Luckily, no. Your father takes good care of you; and he is right. So shy a violet should not be let to drag her sweetness into common day. Do not be afraid. I am not going to compliment you. You are too good

and pure for flattery. I only want to say that if you should ever hear anything of me that might prejudice you against me, do not think hardly of me. We younger sons of good families are sometimes led to take steps that we would rather not take. I have never in my life seen any one like you; and I cannot imagine a happier lot than his will be who shall wander through the woodlands of this world with so innocent and sweet a companion. Oh! if such a lot could be mine!

During this conversation I grew redder and redder—more and more frightened. Captain Harcourt had never said such words to me before, and I did not understand them. I hurried on. He stopped me.

'You do not care for me; but you must hear me,' he said.

I certainly did care for him, but I had a notion that I ought not to listen to him. I felt very uncomfortable; but I suppose I must have looked unusually repellant. There was something in his manner that I did not like.

'I do not quite know what you mean,' I said, walking on. 'I am sure papa would rather that you spoke of something else.'

I felt the smile that passed over his face, for I dared not look at him.

'Innocent creature! I did not know there was in this effete age so simple a child as you,' he said. 'Minnie, I wish, oh! how I wish, I could ask you to think of me as I am beginning to think of you.'

In my heart of hearts I believe I wished he would so ask me; but I did not express my wish even by a glance. I was silent.

'You might say something, child,' he added, in a provoked tone. 'You might at least let me see your face.'

I looked at him. I had nothing

to be ashamed of, and I did not understand his ambiguous language. I liked and admired him, but I was not going to tell him so.

'I am very unhappy, Miss Mayland; but you do not share my sorrows,' he said.

'I cannot; for I do not know them,' I replied.

He did not look particularly miserable, so I reserved my sympathy, and hastened on. He certainly was a very attractive man, and I believed in him.

'Perhaps we shall never meet again after next week,' he resumed.

'I shall be very sorry: but I hope you will come back. Mr. Wallace is sure to ask you.'

'It would be for your sake—if only——'

The sound of my father's voice echoing through the wood arrested the remainder of the sentence.

'Minnie—Minnie, where are you?' was the repeated call.

I answered it as loudly as I could, and again quickened my steps. In a few minutes we overtook Rob and Matilda, and were met, simultaneously, by my father and Mr. Wallace. Both gentlemen looked at us inquisitively, as well they might, for I must have been as red as sunset, and my companion as cross as two sticks. But we were pale and amiable compared to Rob and Matilda. Rob looked redder than I, and Matilda crosser than the Captain. But Matilda soon recovered herself, and began to talk to my father of the church and parish with inimitable tact. I saw, however, the naughty twinkle in my father's eye.

'Minnie, I want you,' said cousin Rob, abruptly.

I gladly joined him, and we lingered behind the others, who were soon out of sight.

'By Jove, I must tell somebody, Minnie. I am over head and ears in love with Miss Wallace. I have been telling her so. I have done a foolish thing, and asked her to have me.'

'Oh, Rob!' exclaimed I.

I quite hated myself. I felt jealous—jealous of Matilda, who had taken Rob away from me. And yet I had no sentimental feeling for him, as far as I knew. I was even pondering silently over Captain Harcourt's words, and wishing that they had been more clear.

'You may well say "Oh, Rob!" I have thrown myself heart and soul at her feet, and she will promise nothing in return. I don't think the girls of the day have any heart at all. She has given me encouragement enough; you must say that.'

'She has so many admirers!' said I.

'Hang 'em! They only care for her money, while I would marry her if she hadn't a penny in the world.'

'How would you live, Rob? You are not very rich.'

'I am not poor. I have my pay, and a hundred and fifty pounds a year. Two people could live on that, and love.'

'Poor Rob! Perhaps she will accept you if her father will let her.'

'She talked a lot of bosh about her papa—the old humbug, I don't like him—and said he was ambitious, and wouldn't let her marry any one who had not a decided position in the world. I told her our family had been gentlefolks ever since the creation, and that there was no better position than the army. At last I made her cross, and then uncle came whooping through the woods like a great owl.'

'For shame, Rob.'

'Oh! he is afraid of you and the Captain, Minnie. I would never have believed that you could be such a little flirt.'

'I, Cousin Rob?'

'You. Captain Harcourt is nearly as much in love with you as I am with Miss Wallace. And you have no objection, I can see.'

'I don't think you have ever looked at me since you have known Matilda. You have been very unkind to me,' said I.

'You haven't wanted me, Minnie. Captain Harcourt has been a very efficient substitute,' said Rob.

'We are cousins, and have known one another always,' I replied. 'I don't see why new people should come between us. They don't care for birds and fields and flowers as we do.'

'You will help me with Miss Wallace, Minnie. Do you know I have scarcely slept a wink since I knew her.'

I promised to do my best, and Rob and I shook hands, and returned to our old cousinly ways. Still, I was jealous of Matilda Sophia.

My father kept me so well employed during the remainder of the week that I was little at the Hall. Rob, however, continued to pay his devoirs at his Matilda's shrine. Captain Harcourt was only there once during this period, and my father and I dined at the Hall that day. There was a large party. All was mirth and excitement, and Miss Wallace was unusually brilliant and well dressed. Poor Rob hovered about her like a persistent moth, and half a dozen other men were equally indefatigable. I noticed that she lavished smiles and nonsense on all except Captain Harcourt. To him she seemed almost distant; but I caught her

eyes, as well as my father's, whenever he approached me.

His manner to me was particularly gentle and kind, but he did not return to the subject of our conversation in the wood. I heard Miss Wallace say to him, 'Is she so very green?' and I wondered whether this elegant colour was applied to me. I did not catch the answer. She certainly was neither so friendly nor communicative to me since the arrival of the Captain as she had been before.

Aunt Nancy was much interested in all my details of the Hall. She seemed to understand the whole state of affairs much better than I did; and her significant 'Humph! so indeed! Like them all!' occurred frequently.

Captain Harcourt called on my father to take leave of him. I was alone in the library when he came, but my father appeared shortly.

'You have a peaceful, happy home, Miss Minnie,' he said. 'And I like your father almost better than any man I ever knew.'

'Do you?' cried I. He had found the way to my heart now. I adored my father.

'Yes. He manages to be good and pious, yet pleasant and still a gentleman. Then he has so much humour. I wish you knew my friends. They are as nice as yours. I am the scape-goat.'

'I am sorry to say good-bye,' Captain Harcourt, said my father, as he came in. 'It is an ugly word.'

Captain Harcourt said he was invited to return, and hoped to do so. My heart bounded joyfully at this intelligence, but my father did not look particularly pleased.

When he was gone, my father said to me—

'My Minnie looks quite melancholy; but she must know that gallant captains are not always to be trusted. This one has certainly been very civil; but she must not break her heart if the gilded oak-apple is somewhat hollow.'

He kissed me affectionately, and I ran away to shed one or two tears. I somehow fancied Captain Harcourt had come for a different purpose.

Rob was also to leave in a few days, and that afternoon he confided to me that Miss Wallace was much more responsive than she had ever been, and had promised to correspond with him. He was in frantic spirits. It was his opinion that if Miss Wallace would engage herself to him, and if Captain Harcourt would propose for me, there would be nothing more to wish for. He counted no costs. But

'A change came o'er the spirit of our dream.'

The following morning our breakfast-table was invaded by the parlour-maid, who came unsummoned to tell us that there 'was news, oh, such news!' The twinkle came into my father's eye, as it always did at such announcements, and Rob and I set down our teacups.

There was great confusion at the Hall. Mr. and Miss Wallace had left, the servants were astir before daybreak, and the reports were outrageous. It was said that Miss Wallace had eloped with Captain Harcourt, and that her father had gone after them.

'Nonsense, nonsense,' said my father. 'Go back to your pantry, Mary. What gossips you women are.' Then, when Mary had departed, he added, glancing at Rob

and me, 'I should not be surprised if this were true. Pretended indifference is often secret understanding. If they have victimised you two they have been very skillful assassins. Don't let them think you have felt the knife.'

Rob turned red and declared he didn't believe it. I turned pale and held my tongue.

'She couldn't bear him, she told me so,' said Rob.

'Then she certainly has not eloped with him. Ladies with five thousand a year *in posse*, and twenty thousand pounds *in esse*, don't run away to please other people. Be happy, then, Robert, my boy.'

But Robert was not happy. He fretted and fumed, and finally walked off to the Hall. He could glean nothing further. Mr. Wallace had come down stairs before his usual time, ordered his horse, and ridden off. He told the groom that he should probably not return until night. The man said he looked very glum. As breakfast waited long, the butler inquired for Miss Wallace's maid. She was not to be found. The housemaid was sent to her mistress's room, and there was neither mistress nor maid. Great sensation ensued. One of the men said he had seen Captain Harcourt and Miss Wallace together in the garden the previous evening, and they appeared in earnest conversation; another that some villagers had heard the wheels of a carriage at daybreak. Nothing further could be discovered.

Rob wandered about furious, and I went to Aunt Nancy, who had heard the news from Becky. I was not in a good mood.

'So, Minnie, I told you how it would be; men are not to be trusted,' Aunt Nancy began.

'I don't believe any of it,' cried I. 'They did not even like one another.'

'Insinuating officers and dowered girls are not amenable to Cupid's general laws. I hate the army. Minnie, I should like to shoot that man. Now you know what it is to be "crossed in love." You will never recover from it, never.'

Aunt Nancy stamped her foot, beat the table, and flashed her eyes upon me. I am ashamed to say I was crying. I did feel slightly awry; but I looked at Aunt Nancy. Must I take to a green Joseph and crêpe turban, and shut myself up for life? Must I grow gaunt and grim, parsimonious and dyspeptic, choleric and ascetic? Such was the result of disappointment to her, should it be so to me?

'Minnie, my heart bleeds for you; come to my arms,' said Aunt Nancy, theatrically.

She threw her arms round me. I kissed her and burst out laughing.

'Hysteria,' she said, 'I know it.'

Perhaps it was, but I stifled the sobs and encouraged the laugh.

'No, no, auntie, I am too wise for that,' I said. 'Thank you for being so kind to me; I have quite made up my mind, and I am not going to be crossed in love.'

(To be continued.)

THE ART AND ACCOMPLISHMENT OF VERSE.

THAT terrible but trite saying
of Horace—

'mediocribus esse poetis
Non homines, non Di, non concessere
columnae'—

is true in its way, yet need not frighten a good many writers of verse who are certainly mediocre if tried by the strictest test. Horace himself was not a great poet by any means, although he is deservedly dear to men, gods, and booksellers. Still, while his thoughts and fancies were often mediocre enough, his style and rhythm were far beyond mediocrity: his perfection of polish, his consummate concinnity, place him high in the ranks of accomplished versifiers. The point to be settled *in limine* is that you may have very good verse which is not the highest poetry—for which, indeed, we want a distinguishing name. Wordsworth briefly indicates the bases of high poetry—

'The vision and the faculty divine.'

Yet, without that *mens divinor*, or apart from its exercise, may there not be delightful verse whose vision is not divine but mortal. Imagination is, in this species of verse, replaced by fancy, and the mastery which enslaves language by the delicate subtlety which woos it as a mistress. The great poet in the heat of his passion thinks not of verse; he compels a strange new music by the force and swiftness of his work. The clever and fluent versifier must think of rhyme and rhythm, of alliteration and assonance; must deftly fit his syllables together, and link stanza with stanza, and polish everywhere.

Mr. Robert Lytton hit the blot when he wrote—

'Genius does what it must, but talent
does what it can.'

It should not be forgotten, however, that genius and talent often coexist in the same person, and that genius sometimes indolently withdraws itself into its own apartment to sleep or muse, whereupon talent takes holiday, occupying itself in its own way.

Leaving the great poets alone, my thesis is that the art of versification is one that may be cultivated with pleasure and profit by educated persons. Heaven forbid that I should increase the number of those who publish (at their own cost) volumes of poor verse. There would be fewer of such folk if English verse were a general accomplishment. It is because people of all sorts (not excluding editors and publishers) think that there is something mysterious and unintelligible in poetry, that such trash is tolerated. Coleridge has two definitions of poetry. He says that it should be either music or sense—if possible both. He also defines it as 'the best words in the best order.' Now these definitions, which omit the divine element named above, apply excellently well to the species of verse now under notice. Unluckily the English language is without a distinctive name for it. Mr. Frederick Locker, himself a proficient in it, has made a capital collection of specimens, but can find no name for them save *vers de société* and *vers d'occasion*. Why should we go to the French to distinguish a style of writing in which Englishmen

excel all others? Among the Greeks *epigram* was the word; unfortunately it has come to mean a brief poem with a point at the end. Certainly the great majority of the fifteen hundred poems which Martial called epigrams are precisely of the same class with our modern *vers de société*.

The Greeks were not without verse of this kind, naturally. I suspect Alcibiades wrote it charmingly. The fifteenth idyl of Theocritus, though it ends with a hymn to Adonia, which rises into more aerial regions of poetry, is an excellent example so long as Gorgo and Praxinoë are gossiping. These two Syracusans, visitors to Alexandria, chatter their small nonsense just as Englishwomen twenty centuries later do it. If Mr. Barnes would describe the conversation of a couple of Dorsetshire women going to a great entertainment at the Crystal Palace, he would very nearly reflect this idyl. But it was not till there was a literature in Rome—first and as yet greatest of modern cities—that *vers de société* assumed their proper form. I do not believe they were written in Babylon or Nineveh; they are unimaginable at the court of a heavy emperor like Nebuchadnezzar, who built hideous images which he expected people to worship, and took delight in music that must have resembled a myriad German bands, each playing a different tune. Troy, I fancy, was a likelier city: one can conceive Paris writing very charming verses to Helen; but, as the Trojan language has perished, it is to be feared they are irrecoverable. So let us return to Rome, which produced the best three writers of *vers de société* the world can show—Catullus, Horace, Martial. Virgil showed some talent that way, but gave it up for the epic;

and it seems likely that Canius, Martial's friend, was a good hand at the same, but, unluckily, his verses have perished. O, Mr. Curzon, why don't you revisit Mount Athos, and search for a copy of Canius? Concerning Catullus—

'The passionate poet, the consummate metrist,

Who sang of the sparrow on Lesbia's sweet wrist,'

it is to be observed that he was very much more than the other two. His passionate love-poetry has no parallel, excelling even Shakespeare's Sonnets; and his satire was marvellously keen. At the same time he was the master of gentlemanly poetry: he was *the* 'gentleman of Verona.' His favourite rhythm, the simple hendecasyllabic, is perfect for this purpose; and, simple though it seems, not easily imitable, as even Mr. Tennyson admits when he writes—

'Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,

So fantastical is the dainty metre.'

Professor Ellis, the most recent and most erudite editor of Catullus, is preparing for the press a translation in the original metres. I look forward with much interest to so daring an attempt. The only versions we have at present worth anything are the Hon. George Lamb's and Mr. Theodore Martin's, and I think the former slightly preferable. If Mr. Ellis is successful, his book will be a treat to lovers of gentlemanly poetry who have forgotten their Latin. Martial, whom everybody calls an epigrammatist, was really a most accomplished writer of society-verse. A version of some of his choicest poems, in the accepted metres of modern *vers de société*, would be a delightful volume. It would teach the Londoner of to-day some lessons of imperial Rome,

and one might style it 'Martial for Ladies.' At present the best versions are those of Hay, who auglicises the allusions, which is a mistake.

Coming now to the English masters of this special style of verse, I quote a few sentences from Mr. Locker. 'Suckling, Swift, Prior, Cowper, Landor, Thomas Moore, Præd, and Thackeray, may be considered its representative men, and each has his peculiar merit. We admire Suckling for his gusto and careless, natural grace, Swift for his mordant humour, and Prior for his sprightly wit. Cowper was a master of tender and playful irony; Moore, as a satirist, was a very expert swordsman, and, although possessing little real sentiment, he had wit and sparkling fancy in abundance. Præd possessed a fancy less wild than Moore, while his sympathies were narrower than Thackeray's, and his pathos and humour were inferior. He had plenty of wit, however, and a highly idiomatic, most finished style, an exquisite turn of expression. . . . Landor was rather wanting in humour and variety; but he atoned for it by his pathos and his pellucid and classical style. The best of his little poems are as clearly cut as antique gems.'

Agreeing with much of this criticism, I am inclined to supplement Mr. Locker's list. Colonel Lovelace and Edmund Waller deserve to be named with Sir John Suckling. And why are Gray and Goldsmith forgotten? It can hardly be doubted that Gray's 'Long Story' gave Præd the hint for the metre which has become most fashionable of all for *vers de société*—

'In Britain's isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building stands,
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employed the power of fairy hands

To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each panel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.'

And of course everybody remembers how—

'Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
The grave Lord Keeper led the brawls,
The seals and maces danced before him.'

Here is evidently the germ of that metre wherein Præd wrote his master-piece, 'The Vicar,' and several other of his poems.

It is instructive to compare the *vers de société* of Landor and Thackeray, and to note how wide a field this kind of writing covers. Landor was a man of immense erudition and great dramatic power; he had abundant wit of the finest water, but scarce any humour. Thackeray knew men well, and women a little; but he never made a successful study of a good woman with intellect. Moreover he was brimful of humour, but seldom witty, and he had no scholarship. So we have 'Peg of Limavaddy,' on the one hand, 'Rose Aylmer,' on the other—a Greek cameo compared with a carving in the black bog oak of Ireland. Vastly as they differ they both come into the class of verse wherewith I deal.

If writing such verse should become the fashion among

'The mob of gentlemen who write with ease,'

it were advisable that some novelty of rhythm should be attempted. By-the-way, to 'write with ease' is not an every-day accomplishment. I think it was Rogers who said—

'You write with ease, to show your breeding;
Your easy writing's.—hard reading.'

It certainly is, for the most part. However, the point to be con-

sidered is novelty of metre. One gets weary of the endless jingle in the style of Præd and Haynes Bayley. Surely the English language is not exhausted in this direction. Mr. Browning, at any rate, can invent new metres. Mr. Tennyson's attempt, in his letter to Mr. Maurice, to naturalize something resembling the Alcaic stanza is commendable. Can the Alcaic itself be written so as to satisfy an English ear? I think so: but at present rhyme is in the ascendant, and for gentlemanly poetry are wanted new combinations of rhythm with rhyme. Are such to be contrived? Questionless. But before I make any suggestion on the subject, let us hear what a mathematician has to say on the matter of English verse.

Professor Sylvester, gentlemen! He is a father of *l'Eglise Invariantive*; has discovered the essential character of the famous amphigenous surface of the ninth order, and its bicuspidal unicursal section of the fourth order; has translated (not too brilliantly) Horace's Ode III. 29; and has arrived at the conclusion that if Horace had been coached by Colenso he might have come out the Numa Hartog or Pendlebury of his year. If this last be true, I am glad the Venusian was not coached by the Zulu's episcopal victim: I prefer one Horace to several Hartogs. However, to come to the great mathematician's theory. Everything, he maintains, is dependent upon *syzygy*. On inquiry, it seems that this formidable word means no more than the constant repetition of certain consonants in your phrases. The Professor says that 'a ruling N sound imparts a certain mildness and serenity, as in the T sound we may detect a sort of vitreous quality of strength. The compound key N T, as we

may call it, is one of frequent occurrence, and forms a peculiarly natural and agreeable combination.' Mr. Sylvester thinks it would be easy 'to ascertain the favourite syzygetic key of any of our more finished poets.' Here, then, is the secret of constructing verse, unknown to the writers of 'Job' and the 'Iliad,' unguessed by Dante or Shakespeare, reserved to be revealed by a mathematician in the year 1870. Syzygy—'word of wonder-working cabalistic power,' as its inventor calls it—is the true key to poetry. You have only to select a consonant as your favourite, and put it in every other word or so, and you are at once an accomplished versifier. The famous alliterator who used up the alphabet in

'An Austrian army awfully arrayed
Boldly by batteries besieged Belgrade,'

&c., would have made a good hand at this sort of thing. But the worst of it is that the Professor's achievements do not lead us to think much of his discovery, though he condescendingly fills eleven pages of notes with explanation of the peculiar beauties of three pages of his own verse. These are days of

'Poets tune-deaf and painters colour-blind;'

and when I find Mr. Sylvester rhyming *far* with *war* and *stone* with *one*, I suspect a deficiency of ear. True, it is said that Mr. Dante Rossetti approves of imperfect rhymes: but my own experience is, that no poet advocates imperfect rhymes who has command of perfect ones. If our host has plenty of Chamberlain in his cellar he does not lecture on the excellence of shilling claret. Nor is the Professor more artistic in his rhythm than in his rhyme. Here is the fourth stanza of his version of a ballad

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of Uhland's, which, 'he is informed,' Mr. Longfellow has translated:

'Beating against the sea-wall,
Made the wind's music gay?
Sounded from the castle-hall
The lute and festive lay?'

Will anybody scan that quatrain? It was hardly requisite for Mr. Sylvester to state that he had not seen Longfellow's rendering; if he had, surely he would have suppressed his own.

Perfection in rhythm and rhyme are absolute necessities in *vers de société*. No *syzygy* will compensate the absence of this. Horace's canon of mediocrity is applicable to the matter of polish: there must be no flaw in lapidary work. My hope of help from an eminent mathematician departs when he betrays his own incapacity to write readable verse. Vain are all his technical terms—his chromatic and synectic, his *syzygy*, *sympnosis*, *anastomosis*.

'*Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.*'

All these Greek polysyllables are wasted, because their inventor can grind no poetry out of them. He cannot; neither can he produce any poetic effect by dealing algebraically with *alcaics*, and reducing one of Horace's stanzas to this sort of symbolic skeleton:

A B C C
A B C C
A B D D
C C D D

This, Mr. Sylvester assures us, 'has a pure algebraical or tactical deep-seated harmony of its own.' Far be it from me to contradict so dauntless a dogmatist. Always quite satisfied with himself is this mathematical poet. He writes of one 'copy of verses' that he has taken considerable liberty with number and time (which is true), but does not find the re-

sult offend his ears. What would offend such an ear? And does he really think that not to offend the ear is the function of poetry? Its business is to charm the ear . . . and, if possible, the mind also.

Reverting to my thesis, that, without aspiring to the supreme region of poetry, gentlemen who have leisure may pleasantly follow the example of Luttrell, Peacock, Captain Morris, I reiterate the opinion that there should be departure from the trite metrical methods of recent writers. Mr. Locker, who is probably the best living master of this style, has some charming variations of metre: the one which I prefer to all others occurs in the poem 'To My Grandmother.'

'This relative of mine
Was she seventy and nine
When she died?
By the canvas may be seen
How she looked at seventeen
As a bride.

'Beneath a summer tree
Her maiden reverie
Has a charm;
Her ringlets are in taste;
What an arm! and what a waist
For an arm!'

A dainty rhythm, which whose tries will find its difficulty. Mr. Courthope, who has nobly dared in his 'Paradise of Birds' to imitate Aristophanes, is also a skilful metrist. That Mr. Swinburne is a master of manifold metres *va sans dire*: I dare say it will make him irate if he reads this, but I think if he would give up *ithyphallic* and *democratic* verse, he would be a more successful man. He has inebriated himself with Baudelaire's poisoned wine. He is a superb Greek scholar. Why does he not spend a year with Homer, Sophocles, Aristophanes, and come back healthier? Opening his volume of *miscellanies* at

random, I come upon the foul frenzy of 'Faustine,' which I recollect reading with a sensation of nausea when it first appeared in the 'Spectator.' Why should a poet turn scavenger, and collect garbage? Turn back a page, and there is the loveliest little lyric, 'A Match,' from which I take the choicest stanza:

'If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.'

That is simply perfect. Again, look at the exquisite verses after Théophile Gautier:

'We are in love's land to-day,
Where shall we go?
Love, shall we start or stay;
Or sail or row?
There's many a wind and way,
And never a May but May;
We are in love's land to-day;
Where shall we go?'

Herewith I am reminded that students of rhythm may find new variations among the French poets, difficult as is their language for verse. Hugo, De Musset, Murger, Chénier, Sainte-Beuve, are worth careful reading: ay, and much may be learnt from older poets, such as Villon, Du Bellay, Ronsard, Remi Belleau. What Victor Hugo can do with such a very un-rhythmic language as the French may be judged from this:

'Mon page, empris mon escarcelle,
Selle
Mon cheval de Calatrava:
Va!'

Or this:

'La-haut brille
Sur ce mur,
Ysult, fille
Au front pur;
La-bas, seules,
Force aieules
Portant gueules
Sur azur.

He has a ballad of two hundred

lines in the former, of two hundred and fifty-six in the latter; both full of poetry and humour. What can be done in French can surely be done in English.

However, as Byron hath it,

'Prose-poets like blank verse; I write
in rhyme;
Good workmen never quarrel with their
tools.'

Blank verse is the most difficult of all metres, and, in perfection, the noblest; superior to even the hexameter of Homer. Byron could neither write nor appreciate it; and I cannot perceive that the popular poets of the day are in this respect better than Byron. The music within music is usually missing from both our blank verse and our rhyme. In the one we find ten syllables in every line, and the writer has remembered that

'Syllaba longa brevi subjecta vocatur
iambus;'

and there are occasional variations of spondee, dactyl, anapest: but of the long-drawn subtle harmony which makes a passage of Milton like a marvellous strain upon a great cathedral organ there is nothing heard. Well writes the Laureate:

'O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for
ages!'

Again, in the matter of rhyme we are too definite and harsh: the words are apt to clash and jar: whereas the sound should satisfy without attracting attention. Rhymes ought to fall, not like hammers, but like autumn leaves—or like the oar-blades of the crew that took the immortal Wanderer away from Aiaia.

'Then the oars of Ithaca dip so
Silently into the sea,
That they wake not said Calypso,
And the Hero wanders free.'

Rhyme should have somewhat the effect of the birds' song in the June woodland when you are alone in a reverie—or, better still, when you are there with the maiden you adore. You don't hear mellow thrush and chirping wren and plaintive woodpigeon—yet their tunes unconsciously charm you. And so does the pulse of the brooklet at your feet, and the *ψιθίσιμα* of the wind amid the leaves. And so should rhyme.

Only the other day an editorial friend sent me eighteen new volumes of poetry, with a request that I would write a brief article about them—and keep the books. I obeyed his behest. I thought the books worth keeping in a dark corner of my shelves, as a curious example of the fungoid growth of English literature. There were eighteen volumes, issued by many publishers, from Longmans in the east to Hotten in the west; and between Paternoster Row and Piccadilly there was but one production in the whole mass that could be called a poem. That was contained in a little volume by a Californian, and narrated, with a certain rough force that savoured of the diggings, the experience of a gold-searcher and a maiden of bronze complexion. There were over a hundred pages in the volume, and the poem I mention occupied eighteen, the remainder being rubbish utterly unreadable. I was puzzled, and am still, by the difference between one-fifth of the book and the remainder. The former ran as freely as a poem of Browning's, the latter was the blankest of blank verse, puerile in its construction and phraseology. Now in this case it seems probable that a single occurrence, acting suddenly on a man's mind, produced poetry very much as the hammer brings sparks from the anvil, and, having once done a

brilliant thing, the writer thought he would set up for a poet. A mistake. No man is a poet by accident. Nothing is more certain than that a poet of real power is always capable of doing his work; he is like a race-horse that can *stay*, you may safely back him for a place. There are no sudden scintillations in his work. Horace tells us that Homer sometimes sleeps: Homer could afford to sleep. He mirrored the life of the time, and that life was often somnolent. Yet was Homer always equal to his theme, and carried Olympus and Ilion upon his shoulder more easily than Atlas the orb. This is the test of a great poet—not to be sometimes brilliant, but to be always strong.

Although, as I have said, those eighteen volumes contained only one piece of three or four hundred lines that could be called poetry, I have seen several of them highly praised by various journals. Only this day my favourite evening paper contains far too favourable a review of a couple of them. Why are critics so unwisely good-natured? Why will they not consider the immense harm they do to young gentlemen (I dare not mention young ladies) who insist on penning a stanza when they should engross? One of the eighteen poetasters under notice had published a previous volume, whereof he appended some encritical remarks. The 'Westminster Review' gave him credit for *curious felicitas*—a phrase which I thought belonged to Horace (just as I thought *myriad-minded* was Shakespeare's rightful epithet till Sylvester applied it to Darwin and one or two others)—and stated that 'his poems were in some respects superior to Coleridge's early efforts.' One of Coleridge's 'early efforts,' to use the language of the 'Westminster,' was the first part of

'Christabel.' Imagine a young gentleman writing about

'Yon moth that hangs her glory on the
wind,
Yon bee now scattering the rose's
dreams.'

being told that he beats the author of 'Christabel!' Is he likely to take to any sensible money-getting occupation after that? Almost as well that he should drink the 'wild-flower wine' which pertains to Coleridge's marvellous mysterious legend as that he should believe the flattery of the 'Westminster Review.'

The great satirist Aulus Persius Flaccus laughs at the

'Corvos poëtas et poëtrias fricas,'

who were a nuisance to Rome in his time. Poets and poetesses are quite as rampant in this London of ours. Those who publish little volumes such as the illustrious eighteen are a nuisance only to their intimate friends, whom they expect to buy and admire their books. Their publishers only laugh, being sure to win. But there are poetasters of both sexes who inflict heavy penalties on the editors of magazines, sending them stuff which is not only unreadable but sometimes even unprintable. And even the magazine poets who have some capacity are apt to be terribly lax and careless. I may confess to the reader as a profound secret that I have written some atrocious verse in magazines myself, once or twice. The general cause of failure in this department of verse is the popular impression that poetry must always be amorous, or sentimental, or in some way ridiculous. I should like to

combat this delusion. The man who wrote

'Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto'

was a poet. The man who scribbles some magazine nonsense about kissing a young woman under the mistletoe is probably nothing of the kind. There are men among us who, without pretending that they possess the qualifications of the supreme poet—

'The vision and the faculty divine,'

can write strong and strenuous verse of the school of Horace and Juvenal, of Pope and Gifford. Such verse, you see, must have some thought in it, must show by allusion and illustration that its writer is a scholar and a gentleman, and therefore covers ground inaccessible to the modern magazine poetaster, who is always in love, who counts his syllables on his fingers, and who writes verses suitable to garden interviews between men and maidens respectively fourteen and twelve feet high. Of better taste in this matter there are undoubted signs, and I venture to hope that good verse-writing may again become a gentlemanly accomplishment. Mr. Carlyle maintains that verse is a nuisance, but Mr. Carlyle has not the power of appreciating the distinction between verse and prose. I should like to hear the Seer of Chelsea's private opinion of the 'Rape of the Lock.' While the felicities of language last there will be multitudes to whom good verse yields pleasure; and to communicate such pleasure what we want at this moment is better verse-writing, with fewer attempts at poetry.

MORTIMER COLLINS.



Drawn by F. Barnard.]

MATCHMAKERS.—THE EAST END.

MATCHMAKERS.—THE EAST END.



Drawn by F. Barnard.]

MATCHMAKERS.—THE WEST END.

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FRENCH NOVELISTS.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

TO a little octagonal writing-table in Victor Hugo's house in Guernsey, which we visited a few summers ago, there are affixed four inkstands of simple and ordinary construction. In the table beneath each of these is a little drawer which when opened discloses an autograph letter. The four inkstands were used respectively by Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and Georges Sand; and the letter from M. Dumas runs as follows: 'I certify that this is the inkstand with which I have written my fifteen or twenty last volumes. ALEXANDRE DUMAS. Paris, 10th April, 1860.' The entire arrangement was a pretty conceit carried out by the late Madame Victor Hugo.

What we would specially call attention to is the seemingly-studied carelessness of manner in which M. Dumas alludes to his works—'my fifteen or twenty last volumes;' as if, forsooth, novel-writing were meant to be looked upon as mere child's-play to him, and the composition of a score of volumes as matter of scarcely more moment than the scribbling of a pack of unimportant letters. But we do not imagine M. Dumas in this instance to have been guilty of affectation. The enormous array of his published volumes is something positively bewildering. Were we to take them, after his own example, in fiftens, and count them cribbage-fashion 'fifteen-two, fifteen-four, &c.,' we should find that the pegs were a long way down the board when we had finished.

Princes, and guardsmen, and courtesans, and mysterious exiles, and intriguers, and millionaires, and diplomatists, and generals, and

impossible sailor counts, and bewitching women,—plotting, loving, revenging; all these we have, and crowds besides of painted characters that form a vast procession through these volumes like the pageant of an eastern king.

Alexandre Dumas was born at Villars-Cotterêts, the 24th July, 1802, and his full name is Alexandre Dumas Davy de la Pailleterie. His grandfather was a wealthy Frenchman, for many years governor of St. Domingo, the Marquis Marie Alexandre Antoine Davy de la Pailleterie; and his grandmother, who was either married or not married, was a negress called either Louise Cessette or Maria Tesselte or Tiennette Dumas;—accounts differ as to her Christian name.

When the Marquis de la Pailleterie returned to France, he took with him his son, a young mulatto of lively temper, graceful form, and some chivalrous accomplishments. The youth is said to have been of enormous physical strength, and to have had hands and feet like a woman's. At the time of his father's second marriage his allowance was stopped, and he enlisted in the army as a private soldier, under the name of his dead mother. He distinguished himself in the French ranks and rose rapidly, attaining the grade of general of division. This was in 1792. Suffering disgrace under the empire, he resigned his post, and died at Villars-Cotterêts in 1806, leaving a widow, and one son,—the young Alexandre. Dumas is careful to inform us that Villars-Cotterêts is two leagues from the birthplace of Racine, and seven leagues from the birthplace of La Fontaine: he thus expects in turn, we presume, that

whenever we speak of the places of their birth we shall describe them as so many leagues from the birth-place of Dumas.

He describes the house where he was born, and says that it has come into the possession of a friend of his, who will let him have it one day in order that he may die in the chamber where he was born, and 'return in the night of the future to the same place whence he stepped from the night of the past.' He did not die there, however, but at Puy, near Dieppe, on the 5th December, 1870.

* Poor fellow! he is one of those to whom most things have had to be a contest. Even his aristocratic name is denied him, which he thinks rather hard, as he did not put it forward obtrusively, only appending it to the name Dumas in official documents. So, in proof of his right to bear it, he furnishes a copy of his baptismal register with witnesses and all possible detail, wherein he is shown to be the son of General Alexandre Dumas Davy de la Pailleterie, and Marie Louise Elizabeth Labouret, his wife. He humorously says that had he been a bastard, he would have accepted the 'bar,' as have done bastards more celebrated than he should have been; but that it will be necessary for the public, like himself, to become resigned to his legitimacy. The name of Pailleterie was abandoned for a time by his father, who, on the old marquis's second marriage, found himself without allowance, and under these circumstances, after a quarrel, decided upon entering the army, into the lower ranks of which the marquis would not allow him to drag the haughty surname.

So Dumas, only, became the cognomen of the future general; and Alexandre, although baptized under his grandfather's name—his father

also having been known as the Comte de la Pailleterie—yet elected, when the matter came before him for choice, to take the name under which he had known and loved his father, rather than that of his grandfather the marquis, whom he had never seen. Dumas' definition of himself as a child is worth quoting as in the highest degree characteristic of him. We translate from his own words. 'I made,' says he, 'a pretty enough child: I had long curled hair which fell over my shoulders, and which only became frizzled on the day when I attained my fifteenth year, large blue eyes which I possess still, and which constitute the best feature of my face; a straight nose, small and well made, great lips, red and sympathetic; teeth white, set moderately badly. Besides, in fine, a complexion of a brilliant whiteness, and which only turned to brown at the time when my hair went frizzy.' Here he would seem to make out that the quadron characteristics only came out with youth: he never avoided, however, the subject of his descent, but treated impertinent inquirers with some jocular scorn. We all know the story of his being interrogated by some simpleton as to his lineage. 'Who was your father?' asked his questioner. 'A half-caste,' answered M. Dumas. 'And your grandfather?' 'A black.' 'And your great-grandfather?' 'A baboon, sir,—my pedigree begins at the point where yours terminates.' There was, however, a strange apprehension in his mother's mind before his birth lest he should turn out a black. She had been some little time before to see a play, and the polichinelle who was acting, being habited in black with a scarlet tongue and tail, had excited her imagination, and she trembled lest the coming infant should bear the like fantastic figure. A slight

accident which attended the child's birth fostered her hallucination for a time. The boy, however, turned out to be of a proper colour, and cried moreover with a natural voice, and not with the diabolic grunting of which she had been afraid.

The general dying in 1806, the widow was left not in the most flourishing of circumstances. The boy had adored his father, who had been notorious for beauty and accomplishments, and, on hearing of his death, he immediately took up a gun, and said he was going to heaven. 'What for?' asked the tearful widow. 'To kill the good god who has killed my father,' shouted the boy.

As adventures are to the adventurous, so all sorts of fantastic, romantic, and ludicrous incidents seem to cling about young Dumas' life; and all these with a sensational and highly entertaining garb he seems to take a pleasure in narrating in his most lengthy memoirs of himself. These are in twenty-two volumes and have not been translated into English. They are considerably more interesting than his novels, and would be well worth being rendered into our language, were it not that Dumas' simplicity leads him to descriptions of details of his life of so realistic and minute a nature as would occasionally shock our Anglican sense of propriety. Of a nature pleasure-loving, careless and vain, and with so rich a fund of life and so little reserve or natural delicacy that he cares little whether he is being admired or laughed at so long as he is but the centre of attraction and the observed of mankind, Dumas gives us by turn the struggles, the pleasures, and the heroic aspects of his life.

Over the whole of his memoirs an air of comedy is thrown. He seems always to be brimful of life

and humour, and everything that comes before him partakes of his drollery. When quite a child his governess comes to him to borrow a book. He lends her a little volume containing one only of the 'Arabian Nights' series of stories—that of the 'Wonderful Lamp.' When she comes for another book he lends her the same volume over again, and so on, until she has read the identical volume fifty-two times over. At last he inquires of her, 'Does "The Thousand and One Nights" amuse you, mademoiselle?' 'Prodigiously, my little friend,' she answered; 'but, you who are so wise, perhaps you can tell me one little thing—why are the men all called Aladdin?'

When about ten years old he is destined by his mother for a seminarist. Prevailed upon by her continued entreaties, he at length consents. Collecting his small baggage, he finds that he is short of an inkstand, which would above all things be necessary to a collegian. His mother gives him twelve sous and sends him to buy one. At the shop he meets with a romping girl—cousin of his, who congratulates him upon his prospects, and promises him that when ordained he shall be her spiritual director. This railery is too much for young Dumas; he flings the inkstand at the shopkeeper's nose, declares he will not go to the seminary, and puts the twelve sous in his pocket again. With these he buys a sausage and some bread, and goes to find Boudoux. Boudoux is a bird-snarer and poacher, a man who could eat 'the portion of forty dogs' at a meal, who is a trifle more ugly than Quasimodo, and who with the strength of an elephant, has the gentleness of a lamb. With Boudoux he remains three days, after which, thinking his mother would have been sufficiently terrified to be reasonable,

he arranges a dramatic return after the fashion of the prodigal son. All the mother's wrath fell upon Boudoux, who, however, gets five francs from her the next time she sees him, and the boy is forgiven without a question as to the seminary. The more that children are prodigals, says Dumas, the better are they received. 'When the veritable Prodigal Son returned to his father after three years, they killed a calf; had he not returned until after six years' absence, they would have killed an ox.'

Thus one great danger was escaped—Dumas was saved from being either seminarist or curé. Had he been such, the religious tendencies which he had at all times in his soul, he says, would have been developed, and he would have become a great preacher instead of a poor poet.

After this he commences to study with a certain Abbé Gringoire. The boy evinces no disposition for Latin, less for mathematics, but is passionately fond of all out-door sports—poaching, snaring birds and rabbits, pistol-shooting and the like.

Everything connected with him points to that excess of vitality, that exuberance of animal life, which is always his most noticeable characteristic, and which actually constitutes the foundation of his literary faculty. He always has a fund of vitality to spare, and with this he can not only invest dry historical bones with flesh and reality, but clothe them also with gorgeous apparel, give them the charm of youth, and make them pass before us in the midst of a sumptuous magnificence which is as fascinating as an unrealized dream.

Both Dumas and his son, it seems, objected to having their biographies written; they prefer, we presume, painting themselves

with their own colours. M. Jacquot, who has drawn a hundred contemporary portraits, and is better known under his pseudonym of Eugène de Mirecourt, complains bitterly of them both. We translate his lamentations on the subject: 'Do you think,' he says, 'that certain heroes of these little books—Alexandre Dumas the elder and Louis-Jésuite, for example—bring a marvellous good-will towards letting themselves be painted? Don't for a moment imagine such a thing. Our announcement of their biography as forthcoming is sufficient to make them endeavour to render it impossible.' He reproaches Dumas the younger for 'troubling the biographical source,' and the biographer seems to be compelled to extract facts from his subject in as violent a manner as if they were engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle. Perhaps M. Jacquot has not reduced 'interviewing' to a science; let him go and learn concerning it of our transatlantic cousins.

He appears to have had some quarrel with M. Dumas; for in writing his biography he makes us see everything under an exaggerated colour and a ludicrous aspect.

Young Dumas, we learn, entered as junior clerk in the office of a notary at Villers-Cotterêts. In this little town was a family of Leuven, one of the members of which seems to have taken a fancy to our young hero. Dumas manifesting a 'violent desire of arriving at fortune,' Adolphe de Leuven counselled him to try dramatic authorship and offered his collaboration. Alexandre tried, wrote three pieces, which were submitted to the Parisian theatrical managers, but everywhere rejected. Then, says M. Jacquot, in an heroic strain, 'The son of the general is in no degree cast down.' His friend Adolphe had gone to

Paris, and the young Alexandre is tormented by an irresistible desire to know the actors then in vogue—a very sensible ambition for a would-be dramatic author. He decides to make the journey with the head clerk of the notary in whose office he is employed. They start on their way with purseless fob and guns under their arms, or, rather, with one gun between them, and a horse. They kill, as they are journeying, quantities of hares and partridges, sell them to the poulterers along their route, and so are enabled to reach Paris. Adolphe receives his young companion with open arms, gives him a ticket to go and see Talma; more than that, he enables him to get behind the scenes, and presents him to the celebrated tragedian between the acts. Talma receives him affectionately, studies his eyes and forehead, discovers the manifest marks of genius, and delivers an exordium as follows. We shall doubtless smile at his words, but every incident in Dumas' life seems to partake of the mock-heroic: 'Alexandre Dumas, I baptize thee poet in the name of Shakespeare, of Corneille, and of Schiller. Return to the provinces, re-enter thy study, and the angel of poesy will know well how to find thee wherever thou shalt be, to raise thee up by the hair like the prophet Habakkuk, and to carry thee where thou shalt have somewhat to do.'

M. Jacquot indulges in a little sarcasm with regard to this episode—'Failing an angel,' says he, 'a devil hostile to literature tarried not, in fact, to take by the hair Habakkuk Dumas, and to transport him definitely to Paris, to be the greatest of misfortunes to modern writers.'

The misfortune of which he complains is that Dumas degraded the standard of literature, causing

people to mistake glitter for gold, and brilliant but false depictions of life and luxury for truth. That he also taught men of letters to be sordid, and to manufacture gaudy rubbish in order to catch the lowest popular taste, rather than to endeavour to raise the standard by the promulgation of their highest efforts. That he, in fact, introduced a low literary ideal, and by his vast popularity crushed the aspirations of a vast number of writers of higher worth than himself. These allegations are not without force, but the literary characteristics of a period do not depend wholly upon one individual. Power will have its way, be it of whatever description; and Dumas, though his nobility may be questioned, cannot be denied the possession of this attribute.

If only we could have a selection rendered into English from the voluminous and wonderful memoirs! Dumas has so marvellous an art of calling to life past scenes, however unimportant, that we are constrained to sympathise with the actors whom he brings before us. These recitals are more interesting than a romance; we are never quite sure how much of them is romance and how much reality, but, doubtless, there is a general foundation of truth, above which, M. Dumas' flowery faculties have thrown out their variegated and tropical growths. Much that is most amusing is recounted of his life at Villers-Cotterêts while quite a youth, and before his entering upon the wide world of Paris. We are told in the most charmingly candid manner about his first dance. How he then began to think that dress might be of importance, and how jealous he was of an exquisite who was escorting a lady, into whose charge

he had been given. How he endeavoured to excite the fair lady's admiration, by leaping over a fourteen-feet ditch and ha-ha, which exploit he thought her partner would be unable to achieve. How he fell and burst the knees of his trousers, and escaping before she had discovered the mishap, ran all the way home and got them mended by his mother. How, returning to the lady, and begging for a dance, he was delicately reminded that he was without gloves. How he managed to borrow a pair from a friend who had come provided with two pairs, lest one should crack in the drawing on; and how such a habit opened to the juvenile Dumas unknown horizons of prodigality. How, by watching the leading couples, he managed to catch all the fashionable novelties of the dance, and by so doing, considerably impressed his partner with his capabilities. How his waltzing earned outspoken praise from a young Spaniard, and he replied that he felt indeed complimented, for his only previous partners had been chairs; since the good abbé had forbidden him to waltz with girls, and in that manner only had he been able to learn the art 'without sin.' How the lady nearly expires with laughter on hearing this naïve confession; and how she tells him that he is a droll boy, and that she likes him very much. How they waltz again, and Dumas tells her she is heavenly, compared with a chair. How the lady with whom he had executed the square dance claims him for a waltz also, but the fair Andalusian refuses to give him up for anything but a square dance. How the young Dumas is in a rapture of excitement and cannot sleep when the ball is over. How he becomes a man in spirit that day, and ever

afterwards a 'frenetic dancer;' are not all these things to be found in the most amusing memoirs ever written?

Once in Paris, Dumas endeavours to make use of some letters of recommendation to some of the old generals of the empire, which he had obtained from the magnates of his department, but for a long time is unsuccessful in finding a patron. At length, on the score of his elegant caligraphy—his handwriting is more clerkly and less erratic than we should have supposed from a knowledge of his character—he is introduced by General Foy to a subordinate situation in the bureau of the Duke of Orleans. He is said to have uttered the following prophecy to his benefactor, 'I am going to live by my writing; but I promise you one day to live by my pen.' The young man studies hard and in time his plays begin to be accepted. Afterwards his progress becomes marvellously rapid. And with his change of fortune, as we might have prognosticated, his habits grow into an extravagance befitting that ideal character, half hero, half sensualist, which fills his books, and which is himself. 'As if stunned by his sudden passage from obscurity to glory, M. Dumas,' we are told, 'plunges with ardour into exaggerations of luxury; he wears fantastic coats, dazzling waistcoats, an oppressive amount of gold chain; gives dinners like Sardanapalus, knocks up a great number of horses, and loves a great number of women.'

He married an actress, and the pair lived together for a while in imperial style. During this time he is said to have called himself marquis and to have retaken possession of the family name. But the magnificent couple spent more money than they could afford in

maintaining their nobility; they were obliged to separate.

Dumas' life was an attempt to realize in our dull and prosaic world that land of enchantment in which all the glories and grandeurs that an extravagant imagination can conceive come into existence at the magician's bidding. He revelled in the superb and the *bizarre*, the gaudy and grotesque.

One thing Dumas has certainly not escaped—charges of plagiarism. He is said by hostile critics to have borrowed, in his 'Henri III,' from Schiller, in another place from Ugo Foscolo, in another from Thierry, in another from Chateaubriand. Not only this, but he is accused of having employed a whole staff of writers to compose romances under his name. The wholesale manner in which he is accused of buying novels and plays is perfectly absurd. He is said to owe most of his 'Napoleon' to Cordelier-Delanoue, of his 'Charles VII.' to Gérard de Nerval and Théophile Gautier, of his 'Antony' to Emile Souvestre, of his 'Marion Delorme' to Victor Hugo; besides which a host of instances are given of novels written to his order by authors of obscure name. Doubtless there is some exaggeration; but it was our hero himself who remarked once, with regard to such appropriation of others' work, 'The man of genius does not steal; he conquers.' Any way he must have had a marvellous mind if he only arranged and ordered the labours of his subordinates, for his works possess a certain harmony, which marks the direction of a single mind.

Some of his thefts he was not ashamed of acknowledging. 'It is men who invent—not a man,' said he. So it is, without doubt, in the case of his novels, say his critics. Another excuse of his is also wittily retorted. Dumas pleads that those from whom he borrows were so

obscure that no one knows their names; and he considers himself as bestowing a boon upon society in bringing to light undiscovered scenic beauties. He alleges, too, that when a stupid critic accused Shakespeare of having borrowed an entire scene from some contemporary author, Shakespeare rejoined: 'It is a girl whom I have taken out of bad to introduce her into good society.' In reply to this, M. Dumas' critics retort that he has inverted Shakespeare's excuse: it is from good society that he takes a girl, to make her enter into bad.

Curious incidents, it is said, arose out of this system of employing subordinates in the manufacture of romance. A certain Hyppolyte Auger, one of his workmen, finding his pay for such journeyman's toil inadequate, went to seek his fortune in Russia. A French journal was published in Russia, in which at the time in question was appearing one of the so-called Dumas novels. Hyppolyte calls upon the editor of this periodical, and recommending himself to him as the author of the novel 'Olympe,' which is just coming out, offers his services for the future in similar work. The editor begs his pardon, but is not familiar either with his name or the title of the work to which he refers. 'Right!' says Hyppolyte; 'M. Dumas signs my book, and has changed the name of "Olympe" to that of "Fernande."' The editor, still incredulous, is shown a letter from M. Dumas, asking for the concluding sheets of the work, in order that its publication may be proceeded with without delay.

Sixty volumes are said to have been brought out with the signature of Dumas in 1845. The quickest romancist cannot produce more than fifteen original volumes per annum; and on the preternatural

rapidity of M. Dumas is based a calculation which proves him to have had either Satanic or human assistants at his command. The most dexterous copyist, toiling for twelve hours a day, will, we are told, produce with difficulty 3900 letters per hour, which amounts to 46,800 letters per day, or sixteen ordinary pages of a novel. This will come to five averaged-sized volumes a month, or sixty a year—the exact number which appeared in 1845. Be this calculation accurate, M. Dumas must indeed have been industrious, or his subordinates must have worked like their patron ought to have done, *i.e.*, M. Jacquot suggests, 'like a nigger;' but we think the rate of 3900 letters per hour allows but for a slow-fingered copyist. Dumas earned enormous sums by his works, and spent his money, as he thought, magnificently. In one year, 'by stealing from the ancients and buying from the moderns,' he is said to have made 200,000 francs.

Quarrelling with theatrical magnates, and finding their theatres inadequate to the proper display of his productions, he manages to get a building erected especially for their representation.

In his gorgeous villa of Monte-Christo, at St. Germain, which Arabs, brought from Algeria for the purpose and decorated, there is on one festival-day a special dramatic performance. The piece is expressly composed for the occasion, and the title of it is 'Shakespeare and Dumas.'

In Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' there are some remarks upon the characteristics, and speculations upon the future of the Negro race, which appear to possess a certain measure of insight. We may quote them here appropriately: 'The Negro is an exotic of the most gorgeous and superb

countries in the world, and he has deep in his heart a passion for all that is splendid, rich, and fanciful—a passion which, rudely indulged by an untrained taste, draws on them the ridicule of the colder and more correct white race.' This description corresponds much more closely to what we should expect of the black race than Mrs. Stowe's portraiture of the 'moral miracle,' Uncle Tom. However, in another part of the book Uncle Tom is shown in his more sensuous moods: 'He was in a beautiful place—a consideration to which his sensitive race are never indifferent—and he did enjoy with a quiet joy the birds, the flowers, the fountains, the perfume, and light and beauty of the court, the silken hangings, and pictures, and lustres, and statuettes, and gilding, that made the parlours within a kind of Aladdin's palace to him.' Mrs. Stowe, with reference to this scene, proceeds to enter upon the following speculations: 'If ever Africa shall show an elevated and cultivated race—and come it must some time her turn to figure in the great drama of human improvement—life will awake there with a gorgeousness and splendour of which our cold western tribes faintly have conceived. In that far-off mystic land of gold and gems and spices and waving palms and wondrous flowers and miraculous fertility, will awake new forms of art, new styles of splendour; and the Negro race, no longer despised and trodden down, will, perhaps, show forth some of the latest and most magnificent revelations of human life.'

M. Dumas has surely forestalled these magnificent revelations of the future. Scarcely can any one be found, we should imagine, more *outré* and extravagant than he was, or with a greater passion for magnificence and very delirium of colour

and ornament. Scarcely, also, will there be found any nature manifested in such fashion, possessing more real power than underlies the revel and riot of his imagination. He may, in sooth, be taken for a type. M. Dumas is at the moral antipodes of obscurantism. Virtue and vice, grandeur and folly, are alike to him, and are woven together into the gorgeous jumble of pageantry that his volumes present to us. We do not object to the presentment of a full and complete picture of life; but M. Dumas does not give us real life. His characters lead an enchanted existence in which there is always the glitter of romance and the seductive hue which is given by the southern temperament of the author. Dumas is a splendid exotic, full of burning colour, of fragrance, of passionate thirst for the sun; he is not a flower such as we meet with in our gardens or fields. Life as exhibited by him is not that of the world but of the hot-house. He makes some attempt to give reasons for the portrayal of so much that is objectionable, which we would rather he had omitted. They occur in the first number of his *Journal*: 'You continue these memoirs, then?' 'Yes.' 'You are wrong.' 'Why so?' 'Because they reveal a crowd of things which you would do as well to leave hidden.' 'To my thinking, nothing ought to remain concealed. Good things ought to emerge from the shade in order to be applauded; bad things ought to be dragged into daylight in order to be hooted and hissed.' We do not object to this position as a general rule; but Dumas did not merely drag into the daylight. He added a fictitious daylight of his own, he heightened, he embellished. The light is so strong that one cannot see the cracks in the gilding.

The redeeming point in his cha-

racter is his complete candour. He is vain to a degree; but he confesses his weakness with becoming simplicity. It is a part of his character: we must take him as he is. 'My pride,' he says in one place, 'did not require to be encouraged to come out of the vase where it was enclosed, and to swell out like the genie in the "Arabian Nights."'

From such a rich, unctuous nature as his, both insults and anxieties seem to glide away like water-drops. His may not be an exalted nature, but it is pre-eminently a happy one; no annoyance can reach it.

In small things as well as great, Dumas was passionately fond of creating a sensation. In his preface to 'The Three Musketeers,' an historical manuscript is so accurately described with name, title, date, and its place and number in the Royal Library, that it has been fruitlessly sought for by individuals who had not learned how well imagination could counterfeit even the most minute reality. 'There was,' it is said, much running up and down the library stairs, much mounting upon step-ladders and tumbling of paper and parchment, much grumbling of puzzled librarians and disappointed applicants, until, at last, the most obstinate became convinced that the aforesaid manuscript had no existence save in the imagination of M. Dumas.' It is this same craving for notoriety which led him to wear conspicuous garments and an exaggeration of jewelled ornaments. He lives to be pointed at, and he cares not whether the finger be raised in astonishment, admiration or mockery, so long as it is he that commands attention.

Whatever may be our opinion of Dumas, we must look upon him as an original product—a nature-

born, and not a manufactured force. He is full of affectations; but those affectations are a real portion of the man—belong to a character in which life is more abundant than control, foliage than fibre. He deserves contemplation—a power grown of the tropical soil of the earth, unrestrained, untouched by the pruning-knife; he is worthy of our attention and wonder, even though his manifestations be but a gush of gaudy colour and a luxuriance of vegetation which approaches rankness. He is no more difficult to comprehend or to place in the system of the universe than is a mighty flower of the great forests of the torrid zone, overlaid with unrestrained revel of blossom, and giving out at one time fragrance, at another miasma. He may not be fitted to be the instructor of youth; but his vagaries may afford wise men a smile, and

if the construction of magnificent castles in the air be not a frivolous and empty pursuit, he is worthy of praise as the prince of architects of such fantastic and splendid dreams.

Dumas, as an artist, follows in the wake of Byron, not of Goethe. He is no tranquil mirror in which are reflected the passing colours and forms of the world; but, like Byron, he lives in his heroes. Every incident that comes before Dumas is impregnated with the Dumas life and luxuriance, and colour. All his books, so to speak, reek with their author. And though he may not be great, he is far from being commonplace. He may be placed by the side of Falstaff, and the two would make a pretty pair of characters, very different, indeed, but equally original, equally entertaining, and equally heroic.

FLORA.

I.

FLORA! Flora! lady of flowers!
 Lady of summer's happiest hours!
 I should like to deck you verily
 With the joyous wreaths you wear so merrily.

II.

For you know I see in that profile quaint
 A touch of the sinner as well as the saint,
 And the flowers fall soft on a bosom curving,
 And those exquisite lips to a smile are swerving.

III.

Yes, I know you, lady of flowers!
 We shall meet again in the sunrise hours,
 When the ruddy roses shame Aurora,
 When the absolute queen of the world is Flora.

M. G.



FLORA.

Drawn by M. E. H. H. H.

Engraved by

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M. G.



FLORA.

Drawn by M. E. Edwards.]

[See Page 462.]

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A RISING NEIGHBOURHOOD—AS SEEN FROM "OUR VILLAS."

I AM living in what is called a fashionable suburb of London, and the house which is my castle is called a Villa. That is to say, the connexion of houses to which it belongs is called 'Villas,' so I suppose that it has a right to the distinction on its own account. Had I to describe it with an eye to that very indelicate thing called the naked truth, I should say that it was a house of two stories and an attic or two above the basement, with a little plot of ground in front and a little plot of ground in rear; built with some attention to ornament, and saved from too severe an association with its neighbours by being semi-detached. I suppose the latter peculiarity gives it a claim to be called a villa—if not, I cannot venture to press what does. Why the entire collection of these residences are called after Lord Palmerston one can scarcely surmise. Do the builders dash into such daring designs of nomenclature? Mrs. Corney, in recognition of Mr. Bumble's ingenuity in naming *Oliver Twist*, declared to the beadle that he was 'quite a literary character.' It may be that literary characters are engaged, regardless of expense, to invent titles for suburban residences.

However that may be, Palmerston Villas holds a potential place in the neighbourhood. It looks down upon terraces; it only half recognizes crescents; it smiles patronisingly upon gardens; it gives the cold shoulder to rows, and the cut direct to places like buildings. It has been even known to speak disrespectfully of squares. How far the terraces, the crescents,

the gardens, the rows, the buildings, and the squares, return the compliment I cannot say, but it may be supposed that each has ideas of its own dignity incompatible with the predominance of Palmerston Villas. It is curious, by the way, to notice how certain names have a kind of prescriptive precedence in fashionable suburbs—and in suburbs that are not fashionable for all I know. In the quarter referred to there are a number of terraces, crescents, gardens, and the rest of it, called Podgemore, and a number of similar residential divisions called Perkins. It happens that Podgemore Terrace and Perkins Terrace are on a line together; and it was ordered the other day by authority that the two should bear the same name for the future—that of Perkins. The object was of course to simplify the Directory, for the benefit of postmen, tradesmen, and private visitors. But the owners of all the places called Podgemore at once made representations of dissent. Podgemore, they declared, 'stood' higher than Perkins in the neighbourhood. All the places called Podgemore let for higher rents than all the places called Perkins, and the change of name would materially destroy the value of the property. It is evident that there is something in a name in a case like the present—a rose named Perkins would not smell as sweet as a rose called Podgemore—but a stranger would not see that the houses under either denomination have any claim to superiority over the other. It is upon some similar ground, I suppose, that Palmerston Villas gives itself airs.

As for the people who live in Palmerston Villas they seem to have little in common as far as their social position is concerned. They are, in fact, ‘mixed’ to any extent. Several retired officers live in the villas. One of them is a K.C.B. There is also a lady somebody who is the widow of a general who enjoyed the same distinction in his day. These people are very quiet in their ways, and, having only small families, do not probably consider it necessary to live in large houses. It may be, too, that they are influenced by the fact of having only moderate incomes; smaller even than some of their neighbours. Among the latter is a man of evidently large landed possessions—only the evidence is against the fact, for he is but a grocer, who has advertised his way into a flourishing business. Another is living on a patent candle, and is said to be burning it at both ends. There are several Civil Service clerks in the villas, by whose movements, morning and evening, the neighbours might set their watches; and a few barristers, who are always in a desperate hurry, and go to town in cabs.

We are a considerable distance from the business part of London, by the way, and the new comers to the neighbourhood have to go farther and farther out. For the place is a ‘rising’ one, and is continually increasing. When many of the present inhabitants first took up their residence it was little more than a village; now it is little less than a town—I mean the shabby part of it, without counting all the roads devoted to private residences. Many people I know well remember when that handsome thoroughfare called the Lime Walk was really a Lime Walk. Now all the trees have disappeared, and the private houses are turned into shops, which are

always being rebuilt on a larger and improved scale. A few of the shops—the remains of the old class—still stand out from the dwelling-houses, having been built upon the original plots of garden ground in front. But these are rapidly disappearing, and the new erections have their several stories built boldly out to the pavement. The Lime Walk is now the principal street. It is no wretched village ‘high,’ where a single tradesman in each line of business supplies the entire community. The small dealers who were formerly sufficient for the wants of the place have either been improved off the face of creation, or have become large dealers, living away from their places of business in dwellings which are only a little too ostentatious. I noticed only the other day, for instance, the house in which my grocer lives; the railings in front are of a bright blue and ornamented with gold, after the manner of the new conservative palisades of Hyde Park. But the proprietor, in the course of what he calls in his prospectuses ‘keeping pace with the times,’ imbibed ideas beyond tea and sugar. He took to wine when the duties were reduced, as well as to spirits, and affects to have the choice of large markets, the advantages of which he has singular opportunities of sharing with his customers. His extensive premises, too, display wonderful varieties of comestibles in ornamental form, and of late he has cultivated an equal variety of articles that have nothing to do with eating and drinking—things that you see at Parkins & Gotto’s, Cremer’s, or the Stereoscopic Company, belonging to that miscellaneous class from which people are supposed to select presents for their friends at Christmas. I am always expecting that the public-houses—which in our

quarter are beginning to call themselves hotels—will go into the same miscellaneous line of business. They are already very jealous of the grocer, and have begun to sell tea by way of opposition; tea made up into pretty packages, which the British working man, after sufficiently patronising the other department of refreshment, takes home virtuously to his wife. The linendrapers, too, are making encroachments upon other branches of business. I entered one of their largest establishments the other day in the famous Lime Walk. It was foolish of me to do so, for my mission was a very mild one—merely to buy a pair of gloves, and I might naturally expect to be expected to buy one or half a dozen of the gorgeous ball dresses displayed in the three shop windows, and wanting only ladies inside them to be irresistible. The people did not bore me to buy ball dresses, thinking, I suppose, that the absence of tenants would be an objection on my part. But the agile young ladies in attendance—I fancy they obtained their situations by answering advertisements for ‘young ladies of prepossessing appearance to assist in show rooms’—besides inflicting upon me such things as writing cases and book slides that I did not require, very nearly made me buy a musical box modelled like an organ with a practicable monkey to grind it, and an automaton model of a little girl lying on a bed, who sat up and called for ‘mamma’ when you executed a gentle pressure just under the bolster. One was six pounds and the other seven pounds ten; and they were decidedly cheap at the price to anybody who could have stood the society of either the monkey or the little girl after the first interview or so.

The tradesmen of the Lime Walk have no monopoly even when they adhere to the strict letter of their business. If one imposing shop be opened, you are sure to see another still more imposing shop opened very soon after. The latest burst of development came from a barber's. For many years after our quarter became a luxurious dwelling-place it contained no establishment where the services of a competent *coiffeur* could be obtained. There was a barber's shop where shaving was possible, and hair might be cut in a style suggestive of a knife and fork as the implements employed. But residents who respected themselves went into town when the outside of their heads required attendance. But our barber went the way, I suppose, of all barbers, and then a hairdresser appeared in his place. The hairdresser set up a ‘saloon,’ with machinery for brushing and the process known as ‘shampooing,’ had a store of some ten thousand articles more or less connected with the toilet, and especially a miraculous hair-restorer of his own invention, which he illustrated on his walls by the representation of a young lady of transcendent beauty, whose already luxuriant tresses seemed to be actually growing in bloom and abundance under a single application at the hands of her maid. If anything could surpass her in art, perhaps it was the wax model of the lady in the window, with the low bodice and the high *coiffure*; but both of these had living rivals inside whose hair was dressed to a degree of perfection beyond the dreams of advertisers, and who were otherwise principally remarkable for strongly recommending every possible article that you showed the remotest disposition to purchase.

But our hairdresser had enjoyed

but a brief reign as the pride and glory of the Lime Walk when another set up on a still larger scale, and as many more attractions as enterprising tradesmanship could suggest. As often happens, I believe, as the result of competition—when not carried too far—the two seem to get on together better than the one got on by himself. In the case of a couple of photographers the result appears to be the same. Indeed, it is the rule in the Lime Walk, where the shops are continually being enlarged or rebuilt into palatial proportions, and everybody—among the business people—seem to be making their fortunes at railway speed. There are a few accidents, such as will happen when that rate of transit is maintained. Now and then a grand enterprise runs off the rails, and does some damage to those who have embarked in it; or a promising speculation gets shunted by mistake, owing to the negligence of a pointsman; and occasionally rival interests come into such violent collision that a smash is the consequence. But disasters are soon repaired—at somebody's expense—the line is soon clear again, and the commercial traffic goes on as briskly as before.

The Lime Walk is a great promenade in the mornings and afternoons; for ladies especially, and young ladies more especially still. The latter go about—under the excuse of shopping, I suppose—with the same pleasant freedom that girls display at the sea-side—two or three or half a dozen together, arranged in those piquant ‘costumes’ which lend to everyday life the brilliancy of a fancy ball. Elsewhere young ladies are lavish in artistic effects as regards their toilettes; but they assume special licence in the Lime Walk, where you see the highest of heels,

the smallest of hats, and the greatest exuberance of hair. The Lime Walk, indeed, as regards these and other characteristics, is less like London than it is like Brighton or Scarborough; and, as at places of the kind, the same people are seen about at different times in the day, they ‘go in,’ apparently, only for the purpose of coming out again, and make themselves charmingly plentiful in the popular haunt. It is not, however, considered *bon ton* to be seen much in the Lime Walk after five o'clock or so; for by that time men arrive from their offices, and some of these disport themselves with a dubious idea of swollism, and have the temerity to stare and make actual remarks. Very different are these specimens of young London from the quiet fellows you meet earlier in the day, who are among their friends and relatives, and never think of ‘doing’ the Lime Walk—as the others call the process of walking there—for the sake of being seen. Moreover, by five o'clock or so, people of well-regulated minds are of course in the park, to meet the general body of their acquaintances, belonging to the great world. At night, I am bound to add, the characteristics of the Lime Walk become more pronounced, and it is much too noisy to be acceptable to its morning frequenters.

Our rising neighbourhood is becoming so much of a town that it actually has its suburbs. A few years ago its present centre was surrounded by open country. But as houses in this direction became more popular, builders marked the outskirts for their own, and the usual signs of extension became observable. For a time you see a brick-kiln in a field; then the field shows signs of being marked out for a road or two. In a few weeks foundations are dug; carts

are busy passing to and fro, making deep tracks on ground hitherto sacred from wheels; and for a time rubbish reigns supreme. Then a few shells of houses arise, and before they seem to be finished tenants are seen taking possession of them. How they got to and from their habitations is their business; it is probably a year or two before the terrace or the crescent, or whatever it is, stands forth complete. Meanwhile, various tradespeople are setting up, to court the custom of this outlying portion of our rising neighbourhood. Some ingenious person seems to have persuaded the licensing magistrates that people in new places want a great deal to drink; for an enormous tavern, with the most modern appliances and means rises, as from the stroke of some enchanter's wand, at the junction of two roads—that are to be, for the roads are the last things made. How he can expect to gain any appreciable support for the next ten years is difficult to imagine; but a few people appear to patronise the place, and to find a comfort in taking refreshment among shavings, sawdust, white-wash, first coats of paint, and pewter counters so new that they look as if they could never become old. A butcher sets up under similarly forlorn conditions, and makes the pioneers of this new civilisation deal with him whether they like it or not. A fishmonger's and a grocer's follow, and all pester the said pioneers by persistent calls for orders. Then somebody who has established a remote connection with a cow opens a little shop, with a representative animal in plaster displayed in the window, and calls it a farm dairy. A chemist's is inevitable in these new diggings—I suppose the new comers are considered certain to 'enjoy' bad health, living, as they

do, in damp houses situated on undrained soil. And frequently it is found that there is a medical practitioner in connection with the chemist, who makes himself conspicuous by a red lamp and an enormous night-bell. How any of these people manage to live at first is a mystery; but eventually the new settlement becomes complete and fully peopled, one of the first signs of settled existence being the establishment of a Berlin wool warehouse, with a tendency towards stationery and toys, and photographs of the Princess of Wales. By this time it is evidently self-supporting, and does not care a straw for anybody.

All these signs of progress we observe from the moral vantage ground of our villas, whence we survey the new settlers as great country families regard the inroads of the mushroom respectabilities who come among them from time to time and insist upon breathing their ancestral air. The names of the new terraces, crescents, &c., are sufficient to stamp them with the fatal brand of novelty. Alma, Inkermann, Sebastopol, and other names associated with the Crimean war, are still painfully new; Havelock and Outram are a little worse; but when people live in places called Abyssinia so-and-so, and the representative tavern is called the Lord Napier of Magdala, of course the old nobility can have nothing to do with them. In the next generation intercourse may be possible, but there is no hope for the present hapless pretenders.

And yet we—taking our villas as an example—are an anomalous community. I have already alluded to the different classes of persons who are here united by a solidarity of bricks and mortar, not to mention stucco—persons who never mingle in life, but have

a relation towards one another on the simple ground that they pay about the same rent for their houses. Among other classes who are largely represented, I should have mentioned retired ‘Indians’—that is to say, persons who have served or traded in the East, and have settled in the quarter for the sake of its salubrious air. But of these comparatively little is known; they live in dignified quietude, and mainly in a society of their own. Other kinds of persons are more conspicuous.

On the opposite side to where I live there is a very respectable-looking man who leaves home every morning at about eleven. I supposed him at first to be something in the city—something more than a clerk, or he would be out earlier. But the lady of the house did not bear out the idea. She is a very fine lady, dressing like half a dozen girls of the period rolled into one, with bewildering bonnets, and occasionally a Magenta-coloured satin robe. She goes out much in cabs, never walking, and at different times from her husband. I find her to be Mrs. Jonesini, her husband’s name being Mr. Jonesini. The husband—he of the regular habits and respectable City appearance—I find to be the celebrated clown of that name; but as the occupation of clown is gone for a considerable part of the year, he occupies a permanent position as a ballet-master at a music-hall, his wife being a singer at the same establishment. They have distinguished-looking visitors on Sundays, who make calls in broughams; and from the manner in which, during the prevalence of east winds, some of the gentlemen are shawled about the throat, I take them to be professors of the vocal art—indeed one of them is reported to be the ‘Great Jukes’

himself, and another no less a person than the ‘Inimitable Jingo.’ It is a privilege to see such people in private life, if only getting in and out of carriages. They are very quiet at the Jonesinis, except when there is a party, and then they are very noisy.

The Filberts, who live two doors off, are a prosaic couple. The man has a pinched-up appearance and timid manners; the woman has a bold profile which suggests the idea of being cut out from a piece of brown paper. They are quite common and uneducated people, but have the character, I am told, of being proud. Their reason for this un-Christian failing is that they have saved a little money—he as a journeyman-tailor, and she as a lady’s-maid,—and so long as their capital lasts, it seems, they are far too dictatorial in their ways to keep the lodgers whom they cultivate to help them to keep the house. They live, apparently, in the kitchen, but it is observable that on Sundays, instead of going down the area steps as usual, they march up to the hall-door and give a double knock. The effect is a little spoiled when the servant, engaged to attend upon the lodgers, sees them coming and opens the area-door in advance, because getting in at the grand entrance then involves agitation and delay. But the Filberts always support their own dignity, except when they forget themselves, and—through the force of previous habits—evinces a spirit of abject subservience to their neighbours.

There are several people in the Villas who support themselves by letting lodgings; but the business is managed very quietly, as the landlord makes a provision with his tenants that they shall not put bills in the window; and one of the common affectations of pretenders to gentility is to consider

their lodgers in the light of their friends. As the lodgers usually fail to reciprocate this arrangement, they soon get clear of establishments of the kind, and prefer to locate themselves where the people of the house will accept the business by which they live as a legitimate calling. It is rather amusing to hear a woman—they are always women who put on these shams—telling you, in the language of the vulgar, that they are the daughters of generals, judges, or bishops, as the case may be; that they are not lodging-house keepers, but let apartments for the sake of society—the inference being that they are strangely neglected by the relatives and friends of the generals, judges, and bishops referred to.

There is a mysterious young lady, occupying the upper part of a house in the Villas, who has remained mysterious for some time, notwithstanding the curiosity of her neighbours. She has her rooms on a yearly tenure, and has furnished them herself; so appearances point to the probability that she intends making a long stay. She is a charming person in appearance, and dresses with an ornate observance of the *mode*, and thus adds interest to the mystery surrounding her. Her way of life is as regular and strictly ‘proper’ as it could well be. But she lives alone; and why? The Villas cannot answer the question, and shakes its head sometimes in default. But it must be said for the young lady, that the worst ever really believed of her is that she has quarrelled with her relatives and chooses to live an independent life. She is said to have friends in the country who send her hampers at Christmas; but

only upon few occasions has she been known to receive visitors. I suspect that Miss Mannering is a heroine of romance in real life, and is waiting to be married to some prohibited person who is making his fortune abroad. Some of these days a hansom will drive up to the door; a romantic-looking gentleman of military appearance, with the bronze of travel upon his nobly-cut features, will alight; there will be a quiet wedding, and a great deal of living very happily ever afterwards. Such at least is my expectation—and, I trust, not to be disappointed.

I mentioned the landlord of Our Villas. He owns them all, I believe, and lives close by. He and his managing man are great objects of interest when they pass up and down. There is always somebody’s roof to be repaired, somebody’s conservatory that lets in the rain, somebody’s kitchen that has taken to a strange habit of smoking. People run out of their houses and seize these two obliging gentlemen as they pass by; and I can fancy that their position is frequently one of no little embarrassment. But matters proceed harmoniously, on the whole, in Our Villas, and the houses let rather more quickly than they are vacated. I dare say some of the Terraces, Crescents, &c., round about are equal objects of interest; but Our Villas claim an individuality of their own; old residents consider a person lost if he is ‘not thought much of’ therein; and for one reason or another, Our Villas assert a proud, not to say arrogant, superiority in connection with our undoubtedly rising neighbourhood.

'HE THAT WILL NOT WHEN HE MAY.'

FROM VICTOR HUGO.

I HAD not thought of love and Rose ;
 Rose walked among the woods with me,
 Of this and that we spoke ; who knows
 How idle idle words may be ? —

I seemed as cold as stone ; and still
 With boyish, listless step I went ;
 I spoke of trees, flowers,—what you will,
 Her sweet eyes wondered what I meant.

The dew had gifts to give of pearls,
 The chestnut-tree had leafy veils ;
 I listened to the mocking merles,
 Rose listened to the nightingales.

Sixteen was I, with sullen air,
 Twenty was she, with shining eyes ;
 The nightingales made songs of her,—
 Of me the merles made mockeries.

Rose, as an arrow straight was she,
 Her fair arms quivered in the light,
 Plucking a blossom from the tree :
 I did not see the flower was white.

A little stream through velvet moss
 A shining silver channel made ;
 Nature and noontide, amorous,
 Were sleeping in the silent shade.

Rose took her sandal off, and set—
 I see her innocent shy air—
 Her fair feet 'mid the mosses wet :
 I did not mark her foot was fair.

I had no word to say the while
 I followed through the woods, but I
 Noted her lips a moment smile,
 A moment open to a sigh.

Until we left that quiet place,
 I did not know that she was sweet ;
 ' We'll think no more of it,' she says ;—
 Ah ! now, I always think of it.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IF we wish to examine carefully into the different Turning Points of human life, there is of course no better plan for doing so than to examine the literature of biography from which, if we read wisely, so many lessons are to be obtained. We would not, indeed, lay very much stress upon this, for every man has to buy his experience, and those are few indeed who are content to accept it ready made for them. Yet Mr. Carlyle said, truly and epigrammatically enough, though at first there seems a tinge of profaneness in the remark, That as the Gospel was a biography so every biography is a Gospel. By this he, doubtless, means that any human history—surely that of the very humblest—if veritably and honestly written down would be fraught with priceless instruction. Of all kinds of biography autobiography ought to possess value and reality. The literature of autobiography is very considerable, though of varying value, and certainly not free from defects. In all biography there is a large autobiographical element, as in letters and diary. In the autumn season of the year many of the newspaper correspondents are giving bits of autobiography. There is an immense element of autobiography in all poetry and fiction, and the truths which man and woman will not dare to say openly for themselves they will often put on the lips of hero and heroine.

When Rousseau wrote his 'Confessions,' in his opening sentences he challenged all time to produce confessions so thorough and un-

disguised. But here as elsewhere, Rousseau was misled by his intense egotism. He by no means enjoyed such a monopoly of autobiography. Nothing can be more undisguised and straightforward than some of the Greek epitaphs which condense their confessions into the briefest phrase. For instance, we greatly admire the following:

'Timocrates, of Rhodes, lies here, and
freely doth confess
That he eat, and drank, and slandered,
to a very great excess.'

There is another autobiography, as full and honest as Rousseau's, and which immeasurably surpasses him in purity, depth of thought, and holy aspiration, those other memorable Confessions, the 'Confessions of Augustine,' which so many good men have made their nightly and daily companions. How wonderful is that set of sketches of moral condition by which he shows how—

'Man may rise by stepping stones,
Of his dead self, to higher things;'

—although we believe Mr. Tennyson is not quite sure whether he was thinking of Augustine when he wrote the lines—or where are there revelations of a deeper love than that of Monica and Augustine, especially that parting scene at Ostia, which seems to have been caught and fixed for ever by the genius of Ary Scheffer. We believe, by the way, there is a learned German who has written a volume to discuss whether the second syllable of Monica is long or short; Mr. Gladstone, in his 'Homeric Studies,' mentions one who dedicated his life to the elucidation

of a single word of Homer; and there is the well-known grammarian, who regretted that he had not early in life devoted his energies to the dative case. French autobiography is not, by the way, of a very able or improving kind. It is all very well to read Montaigne's essay 'On a Man's writing Memoirs of Himself,' but the ordinary experience does not travel much beyond the typical classes of the police experiences of Vidocque or the amatory adventures of Madame du Barry. The great charm of autobiography is that of veracity, which is not the most striking feature of French memoirs.

Everybody who keeps a diary is going some way towards writing an autobiography. It happens to very few men to keep a diary that possesses any real interest—we will not say for the world, but even for themselves. Yet a truthful diary would do much that Mr. Carlyle thinks might be done by it—albeit he holds that the inhabitants of the British Isles are 'seventeen millions mostly fools.' Anybody who has conscientiously tried to keep a diary, tried year after year to make a diary the beau ideal of what a diary should be, knows how extremely difficult that sort of composition is, and how slowly year after year it ripens towards any sort of perfection. In the first place, people who are very much occupied with their pens or professions find that the daily entry is very much like the last feather that breaks the camel's back. The most coarse and rudimentary kind of diary is very much like that kept by Addison's citizen with his Mem., 'Too many plums!' Of course it is utterly impossible that any of these stories which have been evolved by skilful lady writers, under the title of Diaries,

can have been close imitations of actual diaries. The essence of a diary is, that it should include a large number of details which are helpful to a man in ordering the practical details of his own life, and in building up his own character. The diary is to the autobiography what the daybook is to the ledger, and what the quarry is to the building. The diary forms the 'Memoires à Servir,' to autobiography. It is when the diary becomes a record of thought and feelings that its peculiar dangers arise, the dangers of vanity, insincerity, and a morbid introspection of one's life and thoughts. Bishop Dupanloup, in his admirable work, '*La Femme Studieuse*,' gives great discouragement to young ladies in their attempts to keep diaries. The best way is to make them on a solid substratum of daily facts. In a well-ordered life there should be sound registration of the letters written or received, the calls made in return, the books lent or borrowed. A sensible person will not disdain to note even the stories he has told his children, or the wild flowers he has gathered in his walk. Perhaps there are notes about the books that are read or the phenomena that are observed. Any remarkable event, any conversation or chance-meeting with a famous man, any curious vein of reflection, will probably be related accurately and at length. There may, probably, be more sacred and secret observations of one's heart and mind; and, if this is done honourably and fearlessly, and with the application of the elenchic process to ourselves, such a diary will be a true autobiography and very serviceable to the highest purposes of self-culture. As the little volumes accumulated, a man would often look back with the highest astonishment. Despite that truest

doctrine of Identity a man will probably think, that not only does he change his body, but also changes his mind every seven years. It is hardly well with the mind that has stereotyped all its methods and does not advance beyond the fixed limits of past years. The well-kept diary has often helped history, and furnished forth volumes of memoirs, but the supreme value is when it can perfectly render to a man's own mind his own autobiography.

Suppose every man were told that he must construct his own autobiography. In the old Greek phrase a man is evermore writing on the tablets of his heart, and every man is a living book, summing-up and including in himself all the events of his antecedent history. We have heard the suggestion thrown out, that if one day's conversation in society were faithfully recorded, that should obtain many brilliant sallies of wit and most valuable items of information. We are, however, by no means hopeful of this result. There might be a few sparkling grains of gold amid the sand, but the general talk would be like a long stretching muddy beach. The fact is, that ours is an unheroic age, and has little of freedom, fashion, independence of thought, and generosity of feeling, that can alone impart any real interest to a man's sayings or doings.

A burst of self-revelation would not then, perhaps, be very gratifying to the moral sense, nor yet be useful for literary purposes of autobiography.

It is not too much to say that an immense majority of mankind lead a life of organised consistent selfishness. In some respects the method of the distribution of property has something to do with this. Public spirit, generosity, and devotedness have perhaps all

suffered with the accumulation of wealth. For instance, if our present religious and charitable endowments were swept away it would be impossible, in the present state of public feeling, to reconstruct them. It would be hopeless to expect that any voluntary efforts would reconstruct our churches and cathedrals, re-endow our universities, renew our great public charities. There is not the public spirit, or the religious earnestness, or charitable feeling that would suffice for such a work. In our social English life this national selfishness bears very injurious fruits. Some physiologists even declared that it produces very bad physical effects. When a man is a territorial proprietor, and lives amid his tenantry and sees that his fortune comes to him through this intermediate agency, there is generally a strong personal interest, and many links of mutual good-will. One hardly ever finds, however, that there is the same feeling between a manufacturer and his hands as there is between a landlord and his tenants. The payment of large sums of money from public securities, without the visible intervention of those whose hands have wrought for his money, has cut off some of the great outlets of sympathy and has conduced both to polish and to harden society. The great efforts of our well-to-do and good-incomeed classes is, on the one hand, to secure all the rest and enjoyment possible, and, on the other hand, to avoid the jar and jostle and fret of life. It is not to be supposed that such persons avoid some exercise of benevolence, or, at least, some appearance of such. On the contrary, to do this kind of thing, to an extent at least that is some way satisfactory to a not over-sensitive conscience, is one of the luxuries with which it would

hardly care to dispense. Not to put one's name on a charity list is as great a deprivation as to go without the customary *quantum* of port wine. Still, the good they do is very little indeed compared to what they could do. We are afraid autobiography in general would prove something monotonous and uninteresting in the extreme.

Of late years we have had some remarkable works of autobiography. Mr. Julian Young's work was of a very charming and entertaining kind, and we doubt not but he has wisely kept the choicest passages to himself. Crabb Robinson's autobiographical diary was extremely amusing, but somehow our respect for Crabb Robinson does not improve as we progress with it. Lord Brougham's diary is a melancholy instance of the weakness of a nonagenarian. There are hardly any autobiographical works of a more elevated character than the autobiographies of the two Newmans. It is extremely interesting to compare such a book as the 'Apologia pro Vita Mea,' with the 'Phases of Faith.' The train of incident and thought that conducted one brother to infidelity, and the other to the bosom of the Church of Rome, was very remarkably contrasted, and we feel as on difficult, rare heights when we draw indeed a breath different from that of cities. The autobiography of a man named Vine Hall, is one of the most remarkable revelations of character which we have ever perused. It is very interesting to compare the governing thoughts of different orders of mind. One man is rejoiced beyond measure because the French loan is rising, or because the price of sugar is falling, but another man is utterly rent in soul because a heterodox German is appointed bishop of

Jerusalem, or life becomes a burden instead of a blessing because he cannot reconcile the Thirty-nine Articles with the traditions of the Primitive Church.

Some of the best autobiographies of recent years have, unfortunately, been unpublished, being only printed for private circulation. Such an autobiography was that of the late Lord Broughton, better known as Byron's friend John Cam Hobhouse, which extends to several volumes, and will probably prove a mine of information to future historians. The late Lord Colchester wrote a very interesting and pleasant autobiography, which has circulated almost exclusively among family friends. The autobiography of the late Lord Kingsdown was liberally quoted in an article in the 'Edinburgh Review' some time ago, and we see no reason why this interesting volume should not be made public property. It displays some of the best characteristics of autobiography in being a faithful record of habits, feelings, facts, opinions, and contains the striking incident which turned the great lawyer into a great estated gentleman, and drew him from the busy world to a quiet retired life. On the whole, there is no reading which so holds the mirror up to man and reflects the tendencies of human nature, the parallelisms of human history, as biography, and autobiography best reflects the points wherein biography is best. Byron spoke of—

'Longinus over a bottle,
Or, every poet his own Aristotle.'

Every human being, whether poet or not, may at least be his own autobiographer. If he is honest, observant, self-examining, intelligent—especially if by means of a diary he gives shape and precision to his impressions—he might

construct an autobiography which might have a real value and use for those who come after him, and which cannot fail to be truly helpful to himself.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

The appearance of a new poem by Mr. Browning is one of those marked literary events of the day at which the critic instinctively pauses. This book* would not of itself have made Mr. Browning's reputation, but still it is worthy of it, and it is of a character more to our liking than the 'Ring and the Book.' There are some very interesting points relating to the work. Most of our readers will have spent some little time at the last Exhibition, in looking at Mr. Leighton's fine picture of 'Hercules wrestling with Death for Alcestis,' the wife of Admetus. It seems that the Countess Cowper suggested this to Mr. Browning, as a subject for a poem: 'not only suggested, but imposed on me as a task, what has proved the most delightful of May-month amusements.' Mr. Browning's task was to give to English readers a transcript of that play of Euripides which furnished the subject for Mr. Leighton's picture. Mr. Browning takes as his motto certain lines of unnamed authorship, which the reader will recognize as the composition of his late gifted wife—

'Our Euripides, the human,
With his droppings of warm tears,
And his touches of things common,
Till they rose to touch the spheres.'

'Euripides might fear little,' he tells Lady Cowper, 'but I also have an interest in the performance: and what wonder if I beg you to suffer that it make, in

another and far easier sense, its nearest possible approach to those great qualities of goodness and beauty, by laying itself gratefully at your feet.'—A very graceful specimen of a dedication.

But to say, as some of the critics have said, that this poem gives the best insight possible for English readers to the nature of a Greek play, is simply absurd. The 'Balaustion' of Browning, while it includes an almost literal version of much of the 'Alcestis,' is exceedingly different to the 'Alcestis' which Euripides composed. The very fact that, in Mr. Browning's version, we find no distinction between the dialogue and the chorus, would be fatal to such a claim. The choruses of the 'Alcestis' are beautiful, the dialogue is simply execrable; and Mr. Browning makes no distinction between chorus and dialogue. For a dramatic poem that shall be thoroughly Greek, both in structure and in spirit, we must go to the marvellous 'Atalanta in Calydon,' of Mr. Swinburne. What a pity it is that Mr. Swinburne should thoroughly have degenerated from the high standard of that thoroughly Greek effort! Milton's 'Samson Agonistes' gives a very good idea of a Greek play; but even Milton is not so Greek as Mr. Swinburne. Neither can we agree with the intense fondness of Mr. Browning for the poems of Euripides. We believe that, on the whole, his was an unhealthy influence on Athenian history and literature. Most schoolboys must have laughed over the 'rapid interchange,' the parry and thrust, in monostich, of the interlocutors of the dialogue. It has all the jingle of the Attic law courts. We are surprised that Mr. Browning should have cared to reproduce it. It is simply an example of the Eristic art, with which the sophists

* 'Balaustion's Adventures, including a Transcript from Euripides.' By Robert Browning. Smith, Elder, and Co.

were then debasing the Greek mind, substituting rhetoric for thought, and corrupting the moral sense of the community. In the lyrics, the genius of Euripides is unfettered; but here Mr. Browning has not followed his author. Some exquisite translations were once written by a Mr. Anstias, who prematurely died.

Yet the story of 'Alcestis,' under any guise, is eminently touching and beautiful. Mr. Browning has made it still more so by a fine setting of his own. He makes a poetical use of the story—which he, poet-like, exaggerates—that lends a solitary ray of light to the dark tragedy that concluded the Sicilian Expedition. It is said that the only Athenians who then escaped death were those who could rejoice their captors by reciting the plays of Euripides. A boat in which Balaustion (the word means wild-pomegranate flower) is sailing, chased by a pirate, ran into Syracuse instead of Crete—'upon the lion from the wolf.' The Syracusans are prepared to drive them back seawards, when it is found that Balaustion can repeat the 'Alcestis,' the great play about Hercules; which she recites on the steps of the Syracusan Temple of Hercules. Then we have Balaustion's, or Mr. Browning's, 'Alcestis,' with a running commentary, which the English poet makes the Greek maid compare to the ivy festooning the temple; but where indeed the temple—if it be a temple—is quite concealed by the ivy.

The contrast afforded, however, by the modern spirit, as compared with the ancient spirit, is full of interest. While the Greek poet brings out his incidents bare and vividly, as in a picture or a frieze, the English poet is in another hemisphere; retrospective, meditative, philosophical. Admetus

need not die, if some one will die for him. He represents to his aged parents that one or the other of them might very appropriately give up their life for him; but they don't exactly seem to see it. His young wife, Alcestis, offers to die for him, and the mean unmanly rascal, while bemoaning her fate, allows her to do so. It is no wonder that Alcestis is found addressing all her parting wishes not to her husband, but to her children. Now Admetus had received Hercules as a guest within his palace, concealing from him the death of his wife, that he might not be hindered in his hospitality. Hercules gathers from the soured lips of his servitor, who is ill-pleased to see him revelling in the banquet, that there is something wrong, and is told that Admetus's wife is lying dead. Then Hercules goes forth on the hardest of all legendary labours, and rescues Alcestis from the grasp of death, and restores her to her husband. In the Greek play there is not the slightest touch of detestation of the baseness of Admetus; he is rather the hero, who, in most trying circumstances, has upheld the rites of hospitality. Now Mr. Browning has added to the poem two distinct ideas, which were not to be found in the Greek poem, but rather are distinctly alien to it. The first of these is in the character of Hercules. He is a large-hearted hero, more than human and less than divine, who eats and drinks in the happy joy of his heart, that after rest and refection he may go forth to do battle for the human race; a kind of Demiurgus; a happier Prometheus.

¹ Herakles

Had flung into the presence, frank and free
Out from the labour into the repose,
Ere out again and over head and ears
I' the heart of labour, all for love of men:

Making the most o' the minute, that the
soul
And body, strained to height, a minute
since
Might lie relaxed in joy, this breathing-
space
For man's sake more than ever; till the
how,
Restrung o' the sudden, at first cry for
help
Should send some unimaginable shaft
True to the aim, and shatteringly through
The plate-mail of a monster, save man so.'

This conception of Hercules is one of Mr. Browning's best and most characteristic, and admirably wrought out. Then again, the character of Admetus is rehabilitated. It is not enough, according to our modern poet, that his wife should be restored to him; he must also be restored to the better mind which would make him worthy of such a wife. This is a Christian idea, altogether beyond the sheer heathenism of Euripides. In the 'coiled and quiet ugliness' of Pheres, he sees the mirror of his own future. He is made to see that life is unworth the living bereft of his wife, and with the finger of scorn pointed at him for his cowardice. The veiled, silent wife is made to receive a happiness beyond restoration to life, in finding her husband renovated in nature and raised to her own height, that 'hand in hand, the two might go together till they die.'

Such, then, is the play; and Balaustron is made to add an Epilogue to it, from the standpoint of the Athenian who knew all about the dramatic contests for the Greater Dionysia.

'Ah, but if you had seen the play itself! They say, my poet failed to get the prize! Sophokles got the prize,—great name! They say Sophokles also means to make a piece, Model a new Admetus, a new wife: Success to him! One thing has many sides.

The great name! But no good supplants a good,
Nor beauty undoes beauty.'

And very cunningly does the poet make the maid talk of Athenian matters, when, under a thin guise, we see that it is English literature and English art that he is really discussing.

'I knew the poetess who graved in gold
Among her glories that shall never fade,
This style and title for Euripides
The Human with his droppings of warm tears.

I knew too a great Kaunian painter strong
As Herakles, though rosy with a robe
Of grace that softens down the sinewy strength,

And he has made a picture of it all.
There lies Alkestis dead beneath the sun,
She longed to look her last upon, beside
The sea, which somehow tempts the life
in us

To come trip over its white waste of waves,
And try escape from earth and fleet as free.

Behind the body, I suppose there bends
Old Pheres in his hoary impotence;
And women-wailers in a corner crouch.
Four, beautiful as yon four—yes, indeed!—

Close, each to other, agonizing all,
As fostered in fear's rhythmic sympathy,
To two contending opposites. There strains

The might o' the hero 'gainst his more than match,
Death, dreadful not in thew and bone,
but like

The envenomed substance that exudes some dew,
Whereby the merely honest flesh and blood

Will fester up and run to ruin straight,
Ere they can close with, clasp, and overcome

The poisonous impalpability
That simulates a form beneath the flow
Of those grey garments; I pronounce that piece
Worthy to set up in our Poikile.

* * * *

It all came of this play that gained no prize!

Why crown whom Zeus has crowned in soul before?

A very pleasant title is that of 'Moorland and Stream,'* and its writer appears to be a good sportsman and a skilful literary craftsman. The Irish part of the book is especially well done, and we hope will have the effect of luring tourists to Ireland. But the title is eminently 'suggestive,' reminding us of the rich mellow autumn days, and of the healthful sports which men pursue, till the watery sunsets and shortening twilights bring them home to the light and warmth of home. There is something infinitely more sportsmanlike in following grouse, plover, and blackcock on the moors, than in assisting to sacrifice hecatombs of partridges and pheasants, although whole tons of game may be sent up from my lord's plantations to his fishmonger in town. But it is not only he who can best throw a fly, or handle a rifle, that has high enjoyment of moorland and stream. Each separate tourist, though he be like Goldsmith's 'Traveller,' 'remote, unfriended, solitary, slow,' has rejoiced to watch the brown autumn waters, and to move along the high ridge of the moorland. Some pure days of almost Italian beauty intervene—the reliquary grace of the vanishing season; and as the winter is coming upon us, how we store up the recollections of those pure soft lights and airs! It is pleasant to join the sportsmen at lunch in their nook; to criticise the bags, to be sure that one will partake thereof in the pleasant dinners of the future; but we are not so sure that, after all, the sportsmen get the best of the moorland and the stream. The hunter's instinct is not always joined with the eye for beauty. Often the sports-

man pauses to gather in the special features of the panorama of his prospect: boon nature, however, claims an undivided allegiance. The meditative man cannot be on the outlook for game—which nevertheless he by no means despises. We may have our share of the moorland and the stream, which by no means are to be supposed monopolised by guns and rods. We are sure that the true fisherman cares more for the wood-swept waters, and the brooding peace on valley and slope, than aught else; and the elastic turf and the champagne air of the heights are, after all, what the gentle sportsman best loves. The moorland and stream are, perhaps, most of all for the painter and artist.

We cannot profess to review here such a book as Mr. Christie's 'Life of Lord Shaftesbury,' but it may be worth while to state our general impression of the work. Shaftesbury has been eternally gibbeted by the verse of Dryden, he has been elaborately attacked by Macaulay, and he has been sneered at by Mr. Hallam in one of his stateliest sentences. Mr. Christie moves an arrest of judgment. We are never at all inclined to distrust the general verdicts of history, but the historical student really ought to listen to Mr. Christie. The impression which the biographer seems to convey is this, that amid all the changes through which Shaftesbury passed he was true to the cause of liberty and Protestantism, and through all his political life he dedicated himself to the pursuit of those two objects. This was also the opinion of John Locke. On the whole the work will hardly fail to impress the reader with a more favourable view of the character of Shaftesbury.

* 'Moorland and Stream. With Notes and Prose Idylls on Shooting and Trout Fishing.' By W. Barry. Tinsleys.

Similarly, without reviewing the 'Lives of the Irish Lord Chancellors,' we may cull some anecdotes. For the most amusing instances of whimsical speeches, we must of course go to the Irish Bar. One Irish gentleman implored the jury not to be influenced 'by the dark oblivion of a brow.' Another, whose client had instituted proceedings against a false witness, said, 'Gentlemen, my client was not to be bamboozled. They adopted a bold course. They took the bull by the horns and indicted him for perjury.' We are told of another that, looking ahead at his opponent's case, he said: 'I foresee what they are at. I see the storm brewing in the distance. I smell a rat; but I'll nip it in the bud.'

We do not know whether any young barristers have any of the peculiar ways of practising eloquence which have been in vogue since the time of Demosthenes. When Grattan resided near Windsor, he used to harangue the assembled oaks, and we are told that when once apostrophizing an empty gibbet, in a strain of impassioned eloquence, was interrupted by a stranger significantly pointing to the ignominious wood, and asking, 'Pray, how did you get down?' The Irish orator promptly answered, 'I perceive, sir, you have an interest in asking that question.' Plunket told a friend that he had once or twice assailed the trees in Richmond Park. It is said that Mitford, afterwards Lord Redesdale, went circuit simply for the society of the pleasant fellows he met there. He was an Equity man, but still went circuit. He loved the company of such men as Jekyll, Pitt, Dallas. To maintain the memory of the circuit days an annual dinner was arranged at Greenwich, and those who had been

often pitted against each other in law and politics became socially united and passed a pleasant evening. Lord Redesdale's latest biographer, the author of 'Lives of Lord Chancellors of Ireland,' remarks that when we look back upon our circuit days most of us always find a store of pleasant though sometimes painful reminiscences.

'For many a lad we loved is dead,
And many a lass grown old.'

Without wishing to be alarmists it is still something alarming to see in the aspects of our politics some points that possess a close resemblance to the annals of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.' We all try to be well-pleased with the treaty of Washington although, perhaps, the British taxpayer will hardly be so satisfied when, if he discovers—what is quite on the cards—that perhaps several millions of money are to be paid over to America on account of our heroically submitting to claims which could not in justice or precedent be established against us. But we must, probably, go back to the worst days of the falling Roman Empire for an exact parallel to the payment of large sums, not as an indemnity after war, but as hush-money that we might not begin. In those evil days, too, Rome withdrew her garrisons and armies and left province after province of her outlying empire to part as it would. The policy of the Colonial and Foreign Office for some time back has sought to imitate the precedent of national decay. Our colonies, as much as possible, are abandoned to themselves, or with a judicious amount of intimidation might perhaps be wrested from us. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that in the classical procedure the gold given

suggested pretexts to seek for more gold, and that the abandoned province laid open the way to the heart of the empire. *Absit omen.*

HOTEL PRICES.

Let us turn to the practical side of things. We have a good deal of unsatisfactory discussion on hotel prices. The high prices at hotels, of which we hear so much, are by no means confined to the first-class hotels in the romantic neighbourhoods which have turned out fashionable. Where such a neighbourhood is crowded, and a tariff of charges is fairly exhibited, according to all economic rule, we think the landlord is really entitled to charge anything he thinks he can get. Sometimes he over-reaches himself; oftener, perhaps, than he over-reaches the public. But at present there seems a noble emulation among all classes of inn-keepers, who shall charge the highest. We lately took a walking tour in Sussex, to see Petworth and Parham and the other show houses. It may be worth while to mention that the Petworth collec-

tion, so fully described by Waagen, is at present closed during the reconstruction of the mansion. But we found, in the smallest Sussex towns and villages, a scale of charges that would do credit to the most fastidious city hotel. At Petworth, for instance, breakfast was three-and-sixpence a head, and so on in proportion. Brighton and Worthing are almost cheaper than insignificant villages in their neighbourhood. It is worth while noticing, that landlords of the extortionate kind—who after all are a minority among inn-keepers—are always very anxious that their customers should have luggage with them. The reason is that they have a lien upon all luggage, until their demand, however extortionate, is met; but the foot tourist, who carries his belongings about him and gives his address, may bid him seek his remedy in the county court. One of these days we expect that some hardy pedestrian will astonish the landlord mind, and really do this sort of thing, and it will be the interest of landlords themselves, that any gross unfairness should be exposed.

F. ARNOLD.



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A DAY DREAM.

Frontispiece.

[See Page 509.]

LONDON SOCIETY.

DECEMBER, 1871.



A GROUP OF WOMEN BY THE SEA.